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Washington report: Israel has 100 nuclear weapons

By JIM WOLF

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Israel has an arsenal of approximately 100 nuclear weapons, according to a Washington study to be released today.

The study's co-author, Robert Norris, said by telephone that Israel, Pakistan, and India are undeclared nuclear states. He said India and Pakistan have components that could be assembled

quickly to produce perhaps a dozen or more bombs each, whereas Israel has "what I believe to be a ready-to-use arsenal of perhaps 100 nuclear weapons." None of the undeclared weapons states figured in the survey.

Four out of five nuclear storage sites worldwide have been closed since the end of the Cold War and the number of bombs has shrunk by nearly half, the study shows.

The survey by the Natural

Resources Defense Council estimates the five declared nuclear powers deployed about 36,000 nuclear weapons at the end of last year, down from nearly 70,000 in the mid-1980s.

The warheads are housed at an estimated 142 spots in 11 countries, "a five-fold decrease" in the number of storage sites in less than a decade, according to the council, a Washington-based group widely considered authoritative on

nuclear-related issues.

The number of warheads and deployment sites is due to go on shrinking as older nuclear weapons continue to be retired and the US and Russia pare their arsenals under Strategic Arms Reduction (START) treaties.

"If one key to disarmament is verification and physical control, the trends in nuclear deployments... provide hope that forces, weapons and materials can be constrained

and controlled," especially if transparency increases, the report says.

William Arkin, a nuclear weapons expert who is one of the three co-authors of the study, estimated that the five nuclear powers maintained as many as 1,200 nuclear storage sites when US-Soviet tensions peaked for their last time in the mid-1980s.

"By 1990 that number had declined to 600, and today it's down" to an estimated 142, he said

in a telephone interview.

No longer housing nuclear weapons on their soil are South Korea and the US Pacific territory of Guam, as well as former Warsaw Pact members Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, and what were East Germany and Czechoslovakia.

Fourteen former Soviet republics also are no longer deployment sites: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia,

Lithuania, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

About 14,000 of the almost 36,000 existing warheads await dismantlement or are in the process of being retired, according to the 93-page study, "Taking Stock: Worldwide Nuclear Deployments 1998." Of the 12,070 warheads that make up the US arsenal, about 1,350 are scheduled for disassembly over the next three years.

Vanunu allowed out of solitary

By BAT-SHEVA TSUR

Nuclear spy Mordechai Vanunu, 43, was released yesterday from solitary confinement and allowed to walk outdoors with other security prisoners in the grounds of Ashkelon's Shikma jail.

In 1986, Vanunu, who was a technician at the Dimona reactor, was convicted of espionage for handing over nuclear secrets to the London *Sunday Times*. Next month he will have completed two-thirds of his 15-year sentence and his lawyer, Avigdor Feldman, said there was a possibility he would be released from prison then.

Yesterday's decision came in advance of a Supreme Court hearing on the case. In its response to the court, the state attorney's office stated that the head of the Prisons Service had decided to remove Vanunu from solitary confinement, as he had requested in the petition, and that therefore the petition was no longer valid.

The decision to release Vanunu from solitary was preceded by a series of meetings between security officials, Prisons Service officers and Justice Ministry officials. They decided that Vanunu would be allowed to mix with other security prisoners, under certain limitations. Officially, it was Prisons Service Commissioner Amos Azani who decided on the change in Vanunu's status. He did, however, impose limitations with regard to vacations, visits, telephone calls and censoring of letters.

Vanunu requested not to move out of his existing cell, but his isolation was lifted and he was allowed to see other prisoners in his cell as well, Justice Ministry director-general Nili Arad said yesterday.

Human-rights groups and foreign leaders, including Norway's prime minister, have pressed for Vanunu's release. The prolonged isolation is believed to have impacted on his mental health. Vanunu was examined by mental health experts before the decision was taken, Arad said.

Feldman, who telephoned Vanunu as he was taking his first walk outside, said, "He was extremely excited. I haven't seen him so excited in a long time. He said he had walked all round (the inside of) the jail and spoken to other prisoners. He felt a certain degree of freedom." Feldman said this proved that the state had been "far too harsh" in trying to prevent Vanunu from contacting other prisoners.



Purim in Tel Aviv

The Adloyada parades through Tel Aviv yesterday. Story, Page 3.

(Yael Sorek/Israel Sun)

Forces on alert as clashes continue

Soldiers who killed workers released

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

Security forces will remain on high alert today, as Palestinian worshippers flock to the mosques following another violent day in the territories. Police in Jerusalem's Old City have also been reinforced.

In an interview on Channel 1's Arabic service, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, in a personal plea to the families of the three workers slain at the Tarkuniya junction on Tuesday, said the killing was a tragic mistake.

Earlier in the day, Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai telephoned Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat and informed him that a team had been appointed to investigate the incident.

The two paratroopers arrested following the incident were released from custody yesterday morning and toward nightfall reportedly returned to their unit.

There were conflicting reports as to the number of Palestinians injured yesterday. Some claimed 50, others 18. Clashes took place in Hebron, near Psagot on the outskirts of Ramallah, outside Dura, near Rachel's Tomb, Bani Naim, and the A-Ram junction north of Jerusalem. The Palestinian Police attempted to quell the riots near Rachel's Tomb and in Hebron.

The IDF Spokesman said one soldier was lightly wounded near Psagot and an Israeli Arab cameraman was injured in Hebron. Government officials called on the Palestinians to continue joint efforts to restore calm.

OC Central Command Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan visited the paratroop unit at Tarkuniya junction. He told the soldiers that the driver of the van had driven in a dangerous and suspicious way, which caused soldiers to believe their commanding officer had been struck, but he stressed the incident was not an attempted terrorist attack.

The two paratroopers, he said, were arrested because of the tragic result, but as the investigation unfolded it became clear that there was no justification in detaining them. He reminded the soldiers that during the two years of his present command, not one soldier had stood trial for an incident that took place during operations.

The unit's commanding officer, Lt.-Col. Itai, told Dayan there is a feeling of mistrust of high-ranking officers among his soldiers, but said he understands why the two

reporters that, "We are committed to the peace process in spite of all we are facing." He said he had not received any results from the investigation. Arafat pledged to continue cooperating with Israel to restore calm and prevent the violence from spreading.

Arafat's political adviser, Nabil Amer, said the incident was one of many acts of incitement against the Palestinians that have continued through successive Israeli governments. "Security will not be complete until the Israeli government realizes that its destiny is to live alongside the Palestinian people."

The IDF Spokesman said that during rioting in Hebron some 30 firebombs, three explosive devices, and countless rocks were thrown. Troops responded with rubber bullets and tear gas to disperse the rioters. Palestinians claimed at least 18 rioters were injured.

Despite a three-day general strike ordered by Fatah, some shopkeepers opened for business. Poster with photos of the slain workers and the word "martyrs" were posted throughout the city.

At about noon, troops who serve under West Bank Preventive Security Chief Jibril Rajoub were deployed in areas where heavy clashes took place and attempted to disperse the rioters and prevent them from getting closer to IDF troops.

Scores of Palestinian students marched from Bethlehem toward Rachel's Tomb and stoned troops stationed there. Heavy clashes continued for some three hours and troops dispersed the rioters with rubber bullets and tear gas.

Near Psagot, a soldier was lightly injured by stones. The IDF Spokesman said troops used rubber bullets and tear gas canisters to disperse the rioters and the Palestinian Police also attempted to quell the clashes.

See ALERT, Page 12

Dispute threatens Mamilla project

By ELLI WOHLGELER

A dispute over plans to enlarge the commercial space in Jerusalem's Mamilla project, just outside the Old City, threatens to derail the NIS 200 million project.

Sources say a new plan seeks to convert 2,000 square meters of designated public space into more shops and a domed restaurant.

Extensive discussions are going on among the municipality, the Housing Ministry, developer Alrov Ltd., and Carta, the company for the Development of Central Jerusalem, which owns the project.

The new plan, No. 2909 Gimmel, is being put forth by Alfred Akrov, owner of Alrov, the public property development and investment company that has been developing the whole Mamilla project, including the Hilton Hotel and David's Village.

Sources say Akrov has threatened to halt the project within one

month if his new plans are not approved by Carta. The commercial center is scheduled to open on January 1, 2000.

The new plan, which calls for converting 1,800 sq.m. of public arcades into shopping space and 200 sq.m. of an open piazza into a domed restaurant, was discussed at length at the Housing Ministry last Sunday.

Akrov denied last night that there were any new plans to turn public space into commercial space, saying the whole project is "under construction, there's nothing new. It's all according to the plan—the same design, everything is the same, nothing is changing. It's under construction, how can we change it?"

Pressed on the matter, Akrov admitted that "maybe they are putting a glass ceiling, but that's only a design. I don't know, maybe the architect knows. No one is changing spaces."

He conceded that a dome is planned to cover a restaurant, but denied that the restaurant is currently planned for public space.

Moshe Eilat, spokesman for Deputy Housing Minister Meir Porush, downplayed the reported threat, saying it is merely posturing as part of negotiating tactics.

Shmuel Casper, chairman of Carta, who is opposed to the new plan, said: "We have to be very careful here regarding the public interest. The financial interests of Carta are not foremost in my mind as much as the public interest. This is a sensitive location, with historic ramifications, and enlarging the floor space of the shops is not the only consideration here."

Eilat said Porush "is looking at alternatives, and wants to get some advice from his advisers before he makes a final decision. Maybe it'll be approved, maybe it'll be approved in modified form, maybe it'll be rejected."

Court orders negligent father to pay children NIS 900,000

In an unprecedented decision, the Tel Aviv District Court has ruled that a man must pay each of his three children NIS 300,000 in damages for neglecting them and not providing for their physical and emotional needs while they were growing up.

Judge Henia Stein ordered Yitzhak Amin, of Moshav Matzliach, to make the payments to son David, 35, daughter Sara Sharabi, 34, and son Avraham, 33, for abandoning them when they were minors and not fulfilling his paternal obligations under the law.

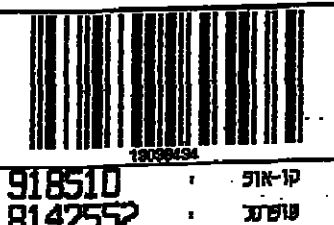
This caused them permanent emotional damage, for which they were entitled to compensation, Stein ruled.

See FATHER, Page 12

Hungarian National Day
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see today's Jerusalem Post

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Haifa	5:17 p.m.	6:22 p.m.
Beersheba	5:24 p.m.	6:23 p.m.
Eilat	5:25 p.m.	6:23 p.m.



Maccabi Tel Aviv fell just short of its quest to return to the EuroLeague Final 8 for the first time in six seasons, losing 68-65

Maccabi bids farewell to Europe

at Teamsystem Bologna in the third and decisive game of the Final 16 last night. Maccabi had a chance to tie the

game at the buzzer, but Borko Radovic's three-point attempt failed, ending Tel Aviv's European season. Full report, Page 24

NEWS

in brief

Arab youth stabbed in Mea She'arim

A 20-year-old Arab was stabbed in the back in Jerusalem's Mea She'arim section yesterday. His wound was characterized as moderate at Hebrew University-Hadassah Hospital, Ein Kerem. He was the third Arab stabbing victim in the neighborhood in the past three weeks, and police suspect that one man is responsible for all the attacks. *Itim*

Susskin gets three-month suspended sentence

Tatiana Susskin was sentenced yesterday to a three-month prison term suspended for two years, for not having performed her 60 hours community service. The case involved her conviction six years ago for having used a photocopied monthly bus pass. Judge Yoram Noam canceled her sentence of 60 hours that he had imposed, and instead convicted her. "I don't know if his decision was influenced by the other case [posting caricatures of Mohammed as a pig on storefronts in Hebron last June]," said Susskin, "because a person is always influenced by what other people say. But he tried to be as fair as he could." *Elli Wohlgeleit*

Iraq's Aziz meets new UN commissioner

Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz met the new UN arms commissioner, Jayantha Dhanapala, yesterday and discussed procedures for inspection of eight disputed "presidential sites," the official Iraqi News Agency INA said. It said Aziz stressed "Iraq's desire to implement" an agreement he struck with UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan on February 23 guaranteeing entry to all Iraqi facilities, including the eight so-called presidential sites at the core of a crisis with the UN. "Mr Aziz stressed Iraq's desire to implement the memorandum and cooperate with the United Nations," INA said. *Reuters*

Netanyahu: Shooting was a tragic mistake

By Jerusalem Post Staff

In a direct appeal to the Palestinians, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu yesterday called the killing of three Palestinian workers by IDF troops "a tragic mistake." Netanyahu's remarks on Israel Television, broadcast in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles, were intended to help end the Palestinian protests that have swept the West Bank since the Tuesday night incident in which soldiers fired on a van load of Palestinian workers, killing three. Netanyahu said he understood the Palestinians' pain and said it was time to resume peace talks. "We have had very tough experiences, we and you, Israelis and Palestinians," Netanyahu said. "We once again express our willingness to begin negotiations that

will bring a future of peace, a future of hope, between the two peoples and prevent new tragedies.

"I know what price you have paid and what pain you are feeling, and want you to know that from our point of view we will do everything possible to promote peace between us.

"It is a time of hard feelings. I know, but precisely at this moment I want to call on you and all the Palestinian public and tell you that the people of Israel and the government of Israel want to go with you on the path of peace."

Netanyahu defended the action of the soldiers at the roadblock, saying they believed they were the target of a terror attack when the van approached the roadblock quickly.

"The standing order in the Israeli army is certainly not to shoot innocent people and to shoot only when the soldiers feel that their lives are really in danger," he said. "And to my regret, mistakes sometimes happen, tragic mistakes of the kind that happened" on Tuesday.

Netanyahu said renewed bloodshed was not in the Palestinians' interest and praised Palestinian police officers for their cooperation in quelling the protests.

Cook likely to talk tough during visit

By JAY BUSHINSKY and DOUGLAS DAVIS

British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook's visit next week is being anticipated with great interest by senior government officials, mainly because of his six-point plan to break the stalemate in the Middle East peace process.

"We certainly will listen to what Cook has to say and we will convey our views to him," said Uzi Arad, foreign policy adviser to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Cook is expected to talk tough when he presents Israeli and Palestinian leaders with the plan for advancing their negotiations and demands a place for the European Union alongside the US in the process.

He told fellow parliamentarians in London this week that he had already dis-

cussed future Middle East moves with US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and they had agreed to "jointly increase pressure for a positive response from Israel."

Cook declared that the peace process would not succeed "if the parties are left to work out arrangements on their own."

Cook's six-point plan involves:

- A restatement by both parties of their "unequivocal commitment to honor existing agreements."
- A demand on Israel to make "substantial, credible and urgent further redeployments."
- A "parallel commitment by the Palestinians to a 100 percent effort on security" along with the "implementation of precise security commitments, complemented by an effective mechanism for their monitoring."
- A demand on Israel to halt "all expansion of settlements."

The opening of the Gaza airport, industrial zone and "safe passage" route, coupled with an agreement to start work on the seaport.

Proceeding to final-status talks "as soon as there is progress on the ground."

In addition to what he describes as this "package of immediate measures to break the deadlock and allow a full resumption of negotiations," Cook will propose "practical EU assistance, in particular on the Palestinian economy and on security, and intensive diplomatic efforts to convince the parties of the need for progress."

He will discuss the ideas this weekend at a meeting in Edinburgh of foreign ministers of the EU, of which Britain is currently president.

Cook also is expected to delve into the economic aspects of the peace process and to uphold the EU's longstanding policy of

providing financial assistance to the PA.

He will be accompanied on his itinerary - which includes Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the PA - by EU special envoy Miguel Moratinos.

"The search for a way to reinvigorate the peace process is one of the key foreign policy priorities for our EU presidency," Cook said on Wednesday.

"We have been increasingly concerned by the continuing stalemate in the negotiations and the risk that this poses to the future of the process and to wider regional stability."

Earlier, he announced a three-fold approach on the EU's behalf: a package of immediate measures to break the deadlock, practical EU assistance, especially to the Palestinian economy and security, and intensive diplomatic efforts "to convince the parties of the need for progress."

Celebrating Purim in Hebron

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

By MARGOT DUDKEVICH

It was Purim in Hebron. The streets in the casbah quarter and Shallah Street had been swept clean overnight from all the bottles, remnants of fireworks, metal rods, stones and rocks that were thrown at IDF troops a day earlier. The question was how long would it take before they filled up again.

As the members of Hebron's Jewish community readied themselves for the Adloyada parade due to start at noon, scores of Palestinian youth threw firebombs, stones and rocks. IDF troops grouped behind the large metal gate separating the Jewish Quarter from the casbah area, and after receiving orders, stormed into the casbah before splitting up to set up positions at Shallah Street.

Several soldiers raced after a Palestinian youth who seconds before threw rocks at the troops and dragged him up towards the Jewish-controlled area. The youth screamed, photographers clicked their cameras. The day was still young. In a nearby road IDF soldiers used metal frames to strengthen their positions and propped wooden boards on the frames for protection. Minutes later a firebomb was hurled at the IDF position, setting the board afire. A soldier pushed the board onto the ground and stamped on the flames to extinguish them.

Aiming their weapons the soldiers fired towards the Palestinian youth. A barrage of rocks and stones fell on the road and surrounding rooftops. "Look out, a firebomb," one soldier called out from a rooftop, as it landed, burning, in the middle of the road burning.

Children dressed in an array of costumes - including a red helicopter, a bride, an IDF soldier, a robot, and a ninja - stood outside Beit Hadassah talking to IDF sol-



A Palestinian looks on as the Purim parade passes through the streets of Hebron.

(Brian Hendler)

diers posted at the entrance. The parade, due to start at 11:30, was postponed until noon. The children laughed and played while waiting for the parade to start.

Back in the casbah and Shallah street, rubber bullets and tear gas were fired at rioting youth. Khaled Zighari, an Israeli Arab freelance photographer, was injured when a rock struck him in the head. He was taken to the local hospital.

Walking down from Tel Rumeida scores of settlers and their children joined in the colorful Purim parade, singing songs as music blared from vehicles accompanying them along the route.

Scores of soldiers and Israeli Police accompanied the parade that moved slowly down from Tel Rumeida and along Shuhada Street, stopping briefly outside Beit Hadassah before continuing towards Gross Square and the

Machpela Cave. At the square, horse-drawn carts driven by local Palestinians carrying settlers' children joined the front of the parade.

Some of the settlers handed out cans of soft drinks to IDF soldiers posted along the route, others gave them *mishloach manot*. As the settlers sang and danced, Palestinians stood at the roadside watching the colorful spectacle. Some of the Palestinians were overheard saying "we are hurting and they are celebrating."

The settlers, however, were oblivious and continued celebrating. As the parade reached the Machpela Cave, gunshots from the casbah area echoed through the air.

The Palestinian Police had beamed up its presence, completely unarmed; some stood on rooftops, others grouped in alleyways and on the main roads, seek-

ing to prevent rioters from throwing stones. Opposite the DCO headquarters in Policeman's Square hundreds of youth stoned IDF troops. The Palestinian forces ran between the rioters seeking to prevent them from throwing stones. A handful of photographers and a reporter ducked for cover in the doorways of storefronts closed a second day after Fatah ordered a general strike.

IDF forces fired rubber bullets, Palestinian security forces called out to them to stop. The rioters, however, ignored their presence and continued aiming with their slingshots and bottles and rocks at the IDF forces perched on the rooftop. A smoke grenade thrown towards the rioters was picked up by a Palestinian youth and exploded in his hand. Walking back towards the Jewish-controlled sector, Abu Firas, the manager of the

Al Nasr restaurant peered outside. "There was a general strike yesterday," he said, explaining many store owners and merchants were afraid to open their stores because of the violence.

He said the marketplace near Gross Square and several stores were open for business. Meanwhile in a nearby alley scores of rioters were chanting *Allahu Akbar* ("God is Great"). Walking through the metal gate up towards the Jewish quarter, scores of IDF and Border Police grouped, their helmets and plastic visors pushed down.

As I left the violence behind, the troops rushed down into the alleys below, screaming as they charged towards the rioters. Seconds later the sound of rocks and gunshot fire blended in with ambulance sirens and car alarms. Purim in Hebron.

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In yesterday's weekly Payis Hazak drawing, ticket number 663341 won NIS 1.5 million, while ticket number 214944 won the car. Tickets ending in 63346, 537778, 473764, 661586, 866351, 390265, 380212 and 268334 won NIS 5,000. Tickets ending in 09394, 05018, 80921, 84456, 39058, 76315, 09659, 56895, 56677, 27028, 43070, 74818, 55409, 20466, 72767, 05431, 41720, 94335 and 89889 won NIS 1,000. Tickets ending in 234, 945, 882 and 938 won NIS 100. Tickets ending in 81, 06, 68 and 38 won NIS 30. Tickets ending in 21 and 27. Tickets ending in 8 and 4 won NIS 10.

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March 18, at 9:00 p.m.

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* This hour-long program in English of "Women in Green" is broadcast every Wednesday at 9 p.m. It can also be heard live, worldwide on Internet - www.a7.org Our program in Hebrew with NADIA MATAR, is broadcast every Thursday morning, between 10:00 and 11:00 a.m. on another Arutz 7 station 105.3 FM.

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See MOSQUE, Page 12

PM Netanyahu

speaks on

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Police begin probe of Hanegbi

By BAT SHEVA TSUR

Police are to begin investigating criminal allegations against Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi in connection with a non-profit organization he headed, after reviewing a file turned over to them yesterday by Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein.

According to a complaint lodged by MKs Eli Goldschmidt (Labor) and Ran Cohen (Meretz), Hanegbi allegedly committed bribery, breach of trust and fraud in connection with his involvement with Derech Tzaleha, a non-profit organization that he set up to combat road accidents.

The MKs said, in their complaint, that Hanegbi had received a salary from the organization and that the organization had also bought a car for him to use. The car is said to have cost NIS 130,000. This meant that only about one third of the funds collected actually went to combating road accidents, the MKs said.

A further allegation relates to Hanegbi's connections with fuel companies that were supposedly interested in preventing legisla-

tion and received his assistance - which would be a conflict of interest, given that he was chairman of the Economics Committee in the last Knesset.

The MKs called on Hanegbi to suspend himself while the investigation against him is being conducted.

Cohen also appealed to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to suspend the minister during the investigation.

Channel 1 reported last night that Hanegbi, who is abroad, said he would not resign. Rubinstein said he would not comment on the suspension issue since he had not received an official request to do so.

According to the MKs, who began investigating the case after a report appeared in Ha'aretz, Hanegbi was chairman and later secretary-general of the non-profit organization and allegedly received a salary of NIS 113,229 over an 8 1/2-month period without reporting it.

He also allegedly appointed friends to positions in the organization and used some of its funds to promote his own image during the Likud primaries.



Ayalon Prison modernized

Minister of Internal Security Avigdor Kahalani (right) and Prisons Service Commissioner Amos Azani open a new wing of Ayalon Prison in Ramle yesterday. The new wing is designed to improve conditions for inmates and staff.

(Yehi Somekh/Israel Sun)

Ministry seeks Bassiouny blackout

By JAY BUSHINSKY

The Foreign Ministry has mounted an all-out effort to impose a news blackout on the civil suit filed against Egyptian Ambassador Mohammed Bassiouny and to have the proceedings conducted behind closed doors.

In an immediate response, the presiding judge issued the ban yesterday afternoon.

Bassiouny, who has diplomatic immunity, has been accused by a female belly dancer who lives in Tel Aviv of making improper advances to her.

Political sources said Foreign

Ministry Director-General Eytan Bentsur submitted a letter to the court through Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein in which he explained the government's interest in preserving the special relationship with Egypt. The sources said the case has caused outrage in Cairo and prompted calls for Bassiouny to be recalled and not be replaced.

The Justice Ministry confirmed last night that the state had requested that the proceedings be held behind closed doors, but could not reveal more details.

Batsheva Tsur contributed to this report

Court overturns release of suspected wife rapist

Tel Aviv District Court Judge Henia Stein yesterday overturned a magistrate's court judge's decision to release on bail a man suspected of beating and raping his wife.

Police had appealed a decision by Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court Judge Mordechai Feld to release the man on bail and bar him from entering his house. Stein remanded the man for five days, as police

had requested. Police said they will finish their investigation and be ready to present a charge sheet by then.

Stein said she was convinced that there was a serious chance the man would disrupt the police investigation if he were released.

The husband, 28, previously served a five-year sentence for rape, according to the appeal police submitted. (tim)

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J'lem doctors to try new AIDS cure

By JUDY SEGEL

Jerusalem doctors have received Health Ministry permission to be the first in the world to infuse into AIDS patients immunologically active lymphocytes following transplantation of bone-marrow stem cells taken from a healthy sibling's blood.

Prof. Shmuel Slavin, whose pioneering donor lymphocyte infusion (DLI) procedure has already cured dozens of people around the world of leukemia, lymphoma and various non-cancerous genetic diseases, believes it could "turn back the clock" for AIDS patients by reconstituting their immune system with donor-derived, immunologically active lymphocytes. Then, when the recipient's body is primed not to reject the donor cells, the patient's HIV-1 virus level is attacked with the available drug "cocktails," bringing it down to what the patient had several years before. Successful reestablishment of the immune system in AIDS patients and heavily

immunosuppressed HIV-1 carriers, says Slavin, is likely to increase their resistance against infections that can kill them. Such biological treatment is also "likely to eliminate the cancer of the lymph nodes and possibly other secondary tumors that often result from AIDS victims' weakened immune system," Slavin predicts.

The experimental and highly expensive two-step procedure will be performed at Slavin's Bone Marrow Transplantation Department and Cancer Immunotherapy and Immunobiology Research Center at Hadassah-University Hospital in Ein Kerem, in cooperation with Dr. Shlomo Ma'ayan, director of the Hadassah-University Hospital's AIDS Clinic. Although approved by the hospital's Helsinki Committee on Human Experimentation, as well as by ministry officials, no candidates have yet been selected.

Slavin, who first used a modified version of the procedure 11 years ago on a baby suffering from a terminal case of leukemia

who is today alive and well, said he was very optimistic that the technique will help AIDS patients since it has worked so well for patients with cancers and other life-threatening non-malignant - including genetic - diseases. However, "I am concerned about the difficulties in financing the program, as each procedure costs NIS 120,000 to NIS 180,000, like a conventional bone-marrow transplant, but it is far less risky. But since it's regarded as experimental, the treatment may not be covered by the health funds. The best solution for us would be for a philanthropist to finance the cost of the first few patients so we can show that it works," Slavin said. "It could prove of great benefit to mankind."

Although most doctors were at first skeptical, Slavin's DLI technique is now the standard for treating terminal leukemia or lymphoma patients after an unsuccessful bone-marrow transplant; it will soon be commonly used for patients with less advanced disease using newer technologies based on much safer "mini-transplants" -

now that Slavin's article on successful clinical trials on this type of patient has been published in the prestigious journal *Blood*. The new therapy Slavin developed opens a whole new field in medicine based on the use of donor cells, which has been named allogeneic cell therapy.

The Hadassah professor explained that performing a standard bone-marrow transplant on an AIDS patient would be "catastrophic because of his severely weakened immune response. But an ultra-mini-transplant of donor lymphocytes is very well tolerated, and it is likely to reduce the amount of available HIV-1 in the patient's blood by eliminating the stores of the virus concentrated mostly in bone marrow-derived cells - turning the clock back and restoring his condition of several years before."

However, adds Slavin cautiously, "it remains to be seen, but we all hope that the lessons from cancer therapy will show us the way for other patients in need who may benefit from innovative biological therapies like our cell therapy."

NEWS

in brief

Taxi fares going up

Taxi fares go up on Monday by 3.9%. The initial fare will be NIS 6.50, up from NIS 6.20. In Eilat the initial charge will be NIS 5.40. A shared taxi from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv will cost NIS 16.10 (from 5 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.), from Tel Aviv to Haifa NIS 18.60, and from Jerusalem to Beersheba NIS 23.90.

Jerusalem Post Staff

Alleged rapist of blind girl indicted

The 25-year-old man who allegedly raped a blind girl, whose details he received from a radio match-making program, was indicted in Tel Aviv District Court yesterday. Alon Koren was also indicted for stealing the young woman's purse, watch and walking cane.

Koren allegedly met the girl at the Central Bus Station in Tel Aviv from where he took her to a deserted garden, raped her, and stole her personal belongings. Several months later he called her again, using a different name, and convinced her to meet him in a Tel Aviv cafe. Once again, the suspect led the blind girl to a deserted garden and raped her. Galit Lipkis Beck

Man sentenced for attempting to murder wife

A 35-year old Ramle man was sentenced yesterday in Tel Aviv District Court to 17 years imprisonment for attempting to murder his ex-wife. Asarah Almo stabbed his wife with a knife seven times, leaving her handicapped, with a 100 percent disability. The man had ignored a restraining order which prohibited him from entering his ex-wife's home. Galit Lipkis Beck

High-tech fairs aim to bring Israelis back home

The Absorption Ministry is running four high-tech job fairs in North America in the coming weeks to try to attract Israelis living abroad to return here.

Besides job opportunities, the fairs will also provide information on immigration regulations relating to returning Israelis and new immigrants.

More than 20 companies will participate in the fairs, including Tower Semiconductor, Motorola, and Elbit.

The fairs will take place in New York between March 15-17; in Toronto on March 18-19; in San Francisco on March 22-23 and in Los Angeles on March 24-25. More details are available via the Israeli consulates in these areas, at the Aliya Center in New York, and on the Internet at <http://www.laei.org.il>

Aryeh Dean Cohen

Police chief alleged to have molested soldier

The Police Investigations Division of the Justice Ministry has opened an investigation into allegations that the commander of the Ramle police station had sexually molested a woman soldier doing her compulsory service with the police, the ministry announced yesterday.

The investigation, begun following a complaint by the soldier, is at an advanced stage, the ministry said.

The station commander has been placed on leave until the investigation is completed. Jerusalem Post Staff

NRA, Beit Jann reach nature reserve deal

By DAVID RUDGE

Nature Reserves Authority wardens went back to work at the Mt. Meron nature reserve yesterday after years of staying clear of the region for fear of provoking clashes with residents of nearby Beit Jann.

The return of the wardens to the nature reserve - considered to be one of the biggest and best in the country - was made possible by the signing of an accord between the NRA and the Beit Jann local council.

It is hoped that the agreement will finally put an end to the land dispute which has raged between the NRA and residents of the Druse village virtually ever since Mt. Meron was declared a nature reserve - over 50 years ago.

In 1987 violence flared on a large scale when NRA wardens backed by scores of police and Border Police tried to remove a tent camp which had been set up illegally in the heart of the reserve.

Several people were injured in the rioting and a number of police vehicles were damaged and an NRA hut burned down.

There have been further clashes since then with residents of Beit Jann at times setting up roadblocks and checkpoints at all access points to the nature reserve, to prevent NRA officials or members of the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel (SPNI) from entering.

Yesterday, however, there were more smiles than frowns following the signing of the accord on Wednesday night. The agreement allows Beit Jann residents free access to farming land inside the reserve, although there will be no additional construction or infrastructure work without prior permission.

Beit Jann local council head Yusef Kaban told reporters that the accord was likely to open a new chapter in relations between villagers and conservationists.

"It's a historic turning point which rescinds all the restrictions that have existed for 33 years on land owned by residents of Beit Jann and enables them to feel that they live with the respect they deserve on their own land," said Kaban.

The agreement also keeps in place a paved road, constructed illegally by villagers, to a memorial erected in the heart of Mt. Meron to the victims of last year's helicopter disaster in which 73 IDF servicemen were killed - one of them a resident of Beit Jann.

The residents later extended the road, but without paving it, through the nature reserve to nearby Hurfeish, another Druse village.

Under the agreement, this will also remain but only as a dirt track for use by agricultural vehicles, in keeping with the natural environment.



Hadassah 'Miracle Mission'

Hadassah President Mariene Post (right), Chairman of Hadassah 'Miracle Mission' Ruth Popkin, and Shlomo Gur, consultant to the Jewish National Fund on issues of the disabled, attend a ground-breaking ceremony yesterday at American Independence Park near Beit Shemesh. Eleven national parks are to be fitted with special facilities for the disabled. (Isaac Harari)

J'lem to receive first Falash Mura on Sunday

By ARYEH DEAN COHEN

The first group of Falash Mura to be absorbed in Jerusalem will arrive here Sunday, and will be housed at the Givat Hamatos caravan site, near the Gilo neighborhood.

Some 200 families will be arriving, in accordance with the July decision by the Interministerial Committee on Absorption and the Diaspora to bring 3,000 of the Falash Mura who had been living in

a transit camp in Addis Ababa to Israel within a year.

Since then, some 1,500 Falash Mura have arrived and are being housed at the Hatzot Yassaf camp near Acre, but that site will no longer be receiving the newcomers because of overcrowding.

Alternative sites have been feverishly sought by the Absorption Ministry in recent months.

Absorption Ministry officials said many local authorities had refused

to absorb the Falash Mura for various reasons. Attempts were made to convince those authorities with strong education systems to accept them.

Absorption Ministry officials noted that besides the attempts to bring in the Falash Mura, efforts are continuing to find permanent housing solutions for Ethiopian immigrants still living at caravan sites the ministry is determined to vacate.

IEC guards' murder suspects remanded

The Tel Aviv District Court yesterday reduced the remand of Iyad Massarwa and extended that of his suspected accomplice, Akram Massarwa, in the murders of two Electric Company guards in July 1995 near Kalansuwa in the Triangle.

The two are suspected of shooting Hagga Lavi and Alex Polianchenko and stealing their weapons. The court partly accepted Iyad Massarwa's appeal and rejected that of Akram Massarwa, remanding him for a further nine days at the Petah Tikva Magistrate's Court. The suspects' lawyer claimed

that his clients were suspected only of stealing a vehicle, whereas the General Security Service arrested them for murder for nationalistic reasons.

Massarwa's lawyer, David Yiftah, claimed that his client was arrested four months ago on suspicion of stealing a car, and GSS agents disguised as Hamas members "persuaded" him to confess to the murder of the guards. The lawyer claimed that the confession was forcibly extracted from his client.

Yiftah also said that as a military attorney he cannot take on security cases in which he has to

represent the opposing side, and if it becomes clear that his client in fact carried out a nationalistic murder, he could not represent him.

Yiftah claimed the police believe the murder was the result of a dispute about an EC power line and not for nationalistic reasons.

Several suspects from Taibe had been arrested in connection with the murder, but were released for lack of evidence.

The court yesterday removed the news blackout that had been in force for several months. (Itim)



Prof. Aryeh Levy

Prof. Emanuel Marx

Prof. Yona Rosenfeld

Israel Prize social sciences winners named

Prof. Aryeh Levy and Prof. Emanuel Marx of Tel Aviv University and Prof. Yona Rosenfeld of the Joint Distribution Committee, were yesterday named winners of the Israel Prize in the Social Sciences.

An Education Ministry spokesman said Levy would receive the prize for his work in educational research, particularly in the area of curriculum and evaluation of educational achievements.

Prof. Marx is being given the prize for his

anthropological studies of weaker segments of the population, including the Beduin, North African immigrants, and Arab refugees. He is known for his belief that despite the visual differences between various cultures, they have more in common than we think.

Prof. Rosenfeld is being honored for his research in social work, in particular his work that led to the adopting of social policies aimed at improving the lot of poor families. Aryeh Dean Cohen

Reuma Weizman: Nation must fight violence against women

By BAT-SHEVA TSUR

"We have spent enough time talking about the status of women. We have to speak about their lives now," Reuma Weizman, wife of the president, said yesterday.

Commenting on the ongoing spate of violent actions against women, Weizman said she plans to make combating violence in Israeli society a top priority during her husband's second term of office.

"There appears to be a gap, a misunderstanding, between the police, the welfare centers and the woman who comes to complain about violence against her. There has to be a shorter process," she said. It is no longer a question of awareness, she

noted. "Before we used to say the women are shy or the family wants to hide it. This is no longer true in Israel at the end of the 20th century. It's out in the open but it does not receive the proper treatment. I plan to do my homework better and to put it at the top of my agenda."

Weizman added: "We need to investigate more why women take their complaints back. We must not take this in our stride."

She was speaking during a visit to an ethnographic exhibition on Afghani Jewry at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem yesterday. Weizman met members of the once 6,000-strong community which is now extinct in Afghanistan. They presented her with a Purim "mishloach manot" which, according to the community's custom, must include something green such as cucumbers or lettuce.

Agudat Yisrael presses Milo to shut Tel Aviv businesses on Shabbat

By MICHAEL YUDELMAN

Agudat Yisrael is threatening to try to terminate Tel Aviv Mayor Ronni Milo's political career unless he revokes a by-law enabling the opening of businesses on weekends and holidays.

"Milo can forget about running for prime minister, he cannot even dream of it," Rabbi Menachem Porush, head of Agudat Yisrael's national center, said Wednesday.

"Milo could repent if he cancels the awful deed [amending the municipal by-law]. But if he continues in this way he's politically finished, totally," Porush said.

Porush had led a protest rally against Milo at Tel Aviv's Great

Synagogue the previous evening.

He compared Milo's act in Tel Aviv to Sodom and Gomorrah, whose leaders "legitimized all kinds of crimes and licentious acts. Changing the by-law has given access to severe breaches of the Sabbath."

Porush said, "Whoever has dared to desecrate the Sabbath has disappeared from the world. Anyone who institutionalizes Sabbath desecration is committing an unforgivable crime."

Milo responded that he would not compromise on Tel Aviv's secular residents' freedom from religious coercion.

"The one thing I won't surrender to is hardi rulings restricting the secular residents. I cannot accept that morally, or with a

clear conscience, even if it means giving up being mayor or prime minister," Milo said.

"No threats of boycotts or ostracism can change my mind. In this corner each person must have the freedom to live as he or she sees fit, and I'll protect that right in Tel Aviv. If I can help achieve that in other parts of the country, I will," he added.

"Tel Aviv has enjoyed full activity of cinemas, clubs, restaurants and cafes for decades, and people come from all over, including Jerusalem, to entertain themselves here on weekends. Why, even [Jerusalem Mayor Ehud] Olmert, in whose city the pedestrian mall and cafes are open on Saturday, is alive and kicking politically."

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Hadassah Means Health

The Jewish Agency for Israel

is now accepting applications from non-profit organizations to fund innovative and creative projects, in 1999, that will enhance the quality of life in Israeli society, by addressing the needs of youth, (ages 13-18).

To receive application forms or further information, please contact:

Allocations Unit-Office of the Secretary General, Jewish Agency for Israel, 48 King George Street, POB 92, Jerusalem 91000, Tel: 02-6202450, 6202451

All applications must be submitted by May 7, 1998 in order to be considered.

An informational seminar to explain policy, criteria and the application process, will take place on Wednesday, March 18, Adar 20, from 9:00-14:00, at Givat Haviva (near Hadera). For further information and reservation, please call 02-620-2450/1.



With great sadness, we announce the passing of
MAURICE (May) KRETZMER

For details on the funeral,
call 02-678-1598, 02-671-2324.

Rose Kretzmer
David Kretzmer and family
Ruth and Stan Cohen and family
Natalie and Stan Gordon and family

ברוך דיין האמת

We regret to announce the passing of our beloved mother
and grandmother

HELEN SPRITZER

The funeral will take place this morning,
Friday, at Eretz Hahaim Cemetery
For the exact time call 02-627 3343, 02-627 4316

Rabbi David Spritzer and Family
Rozy Badichi and Family

NORAH SYLVIA BLOOM (Jacobs)

passed away peacefully in London on March 9, 1998

Deeply mourned by her loving children
and grandchildren in Israel

Doris and Ronald Bloom
Tamar and Doron Rosen
Sharon and Ariel Nir

and her other children and grandchildren in England

On the first *yahrzeit* after the passing of our father

RUBEN (Ruby) CARL

we will gather at his grave on Har Hamenuhot on
Friday, March 20, 1998 (22 Adar 5758)

We will meet near the main gate at 10 a.m.

Atarah Gur
Nechama Carl
Raphael Carl

On the *shloshim* after the passing of

SYDNEY KATZENELL ז"ל

the unveiling of the tombstone will take place
on Tuesday, March 17, at 10 a.m. at the Nahal Ezer Cemetery
The Family

The *shloshim* in memory of our beloved

SIMIE WEINSTEIN ז"ל

will be held on Sunday, March 15, 1998 at 3:30 p.m.
at the Yarkon Cemetery. We will meet at the gate

Mickey, Yigal, Eli and families

On the conclusion of the *shloshim* in memory of

Dr. NORMAN Wm. SHAUL

we will meet at the Nahalat Yitzhak Cemetery in
Givatayim on Sunday, March 15 at 3 p.m.

We thank everyone for their visits
and solace during the shiva

The Shaul Family

On the first *yahrzeit* of our beloved

CHARLES F. FRANKEL ז"ל

there will be a memorial ceremony at his grave
on the Mount of Olives (Agudat Achim)
on Sunday, March 15 (17 Adar) at 10 a.m.

For information, call 02-652-1238

The Frankel Family

In deep sorrow, we announce the loss of

ANDREW MANN D.Sc.

Dear son of Helen
Husband of Rikky

Father of children: Michal, Guy and Ayalah
Brother of Barbara Levron and family

Tragically killed in a traffic accident

Beit Protea

On the first *yahrzeit*
of our beloved son and brother

JOSHUA MARC LEIBOWITZ ז"ל

a memorial service will be held on Tuesday
March 17, 1998 at Kehilat Moriah,
44 Jabotinsky St., Jerusalem, at 8 p.m.

The Family

BEZALEL
Academy of Arts and Design, Jerusalem

expresses its sincere condolences to

Ronnie Shapiro

Chairman of the International Board of Governors
on the passing of his beloved sister

Rosa Israel ז"ל

Harry Sapir
Chairman, Board of Directors

Ran Sapoznik
Head of the Academy

Chile protests Pinochet's joining Senate

By EVA YERGARA

VALPARAISO, Chile (AP) -- Days of street demonstrations spread to Chile's Senate, where lawmakers protested the appointment of Gen. Augusto Pinochet as senator for life by displaying photos of dissidents killed during his 17-year dictatorship.

Without his usual security detail with him, Pinochet had to rely on some right-wing lawmakers to surround him as tensions mounted Wednesday on the Senate floor and in the stands while he was sworn in.

Outside the Congress building in this port city near Santiago, police used water cannons and tear gas to scatter hundreds of demonstrators protesting Pinochet's new position -- a perk granted him by the constitution written during his 1973-

1990 dictatorship.

At least 130 people were detained in Valparaiso, and another 78 people were detained during protests in Santiago, police reported.

Pinochet's critics say a man who shut down Congress after taking power in a bloody military coup has no place in the legislature. More than 3,000 people were killed for political reasons during Pinochet's rule, according to official figures.

As the 82-year-old retired army commander was sworn in and cast his first vote in the new job, a man shouted, "Assassin!" from the Senate stands.

Pinochet appeared unmoved, occasionally smiling and his arms crossed, even as he saw lawmakers from the ruling coalition enter the Senate floor carrying the black-and-white pho-

tographs.

Some photographs carried captions asking "Where are they?" -- a reference to about 1,100 people the government says disappeared after being arrested by Pinochet's security services.

One of the pictures was of Salvador Allende, the leftist president Pinochet toppled in a bloody 1973 coup. And one of the protesting legislators was Allende's daughter, Isabel, who called Pinochet's senate seat "a shame for Chile." While photos of victims have long been used in anti-Pinochet demonstrations, never before has he been known to be so close to such displays.

Like all Congress members, he has some immunity from prosecution, as he did as army chief. Pinochet also is covered by a 1978 amnesty law and a decree he issued shortly before stepping

down from power, which prevents actions by his government's top ranking officials -- himself included -- from even being investigated.

Pinochet's usual heavy security detail was not allowed inside the Senate, but several right-wing legislators assumed that job.

One lawmaker who surrounded Pinochet, Sen. Julio Lagos, explained later that "we feared for the general's safety. The campaign against him in recent days sought to assassinate his image. The next step may be trying to assassinate him," Lagos said.

Senate President Sergio Romero delayed the start of Wednesday's session for about 15 minutes, insisting that senators from the governing coalition remove the pictures from their desks.

Temperatures were so inflamed that

rightist congressman Sergio Correa struck his socialist colleague Jorge Soria in the face.

As order was restored, Romero swore in Pinochet and 19 senators elected in December.

Andres Zaldivar of the ruling Christian Democratic Party was elected to succeed Romero as Senate president. As Pinochet cast his vote, a man shouted "Assassin!" and was removed by police.

Demonstrations against Pinochet's Senate seat started several days ago in many Chilean cities and became violent in Santiago on Tuesday, when Pinochet stepped down as commander in chief of the army.

As he left the Senate well before the end of Wednesday's session, again guarded by Lagos, Pinochet refused to comment on the incidents.

Mandela to testify in rugby racism case

By BUCHIZYA MSETEKA

JOHANNESBURG (Reuters) -- South African President Nelson Mandela will testify in a case involving allegations of racism in rugby, his office said on Thursday, a move that could have wide legal consequences.

State radio reported that Pretoria High Court judge William de Villiers dismissed an application by Mandela's legal team to prevent him from taking the stand.

Mandela's office responded swiftly, saying Mandela would abide by the court's verdict, making him the first sitting South African president to testify on an executive decision in open court.

The judge rejected the argument by Mandela's lawyer, Wim Trengove, that the circumstances of the case no longer justified Mandela's testimony. De Villiers said that although public interest demands that the dignity of the state be protected, justice had to be done.

Asked about Mandela's feelings on the court outcome, the president's spokesman, Parks Mankahlana, said: "Our reservations about the case still remain, but the president has no choice in this matter but to comply with the court order." Legal experts and government aides are worried that an appearance by the president -- a former lawyer sentenced to life imprisonment for treason under apartheid in 1963 -- may make him a target for other court challenges.

"He will be in and out of court all the time," senior adviser Joel Netshitenzhe told Reuters earlier this week.

Constitutional lawyer Feteri Leon said: "It could mean that the president could be subjected to cross-examination on every executive decision he takes."

Leon compared Mandela's situation with the Paula Jones sexual harassment case against US President Bill Clinton. "The international precedent is also not on his side after the US Supreme Court's decision last year," he said.

The court ruled that the Jones lawsuit should go forward and not be put on hold until Clinton had left office. Clinton was forced to answer questions about the case, but not in public.

Other analysts pointed out, however, that Mandela was being asked to justify an executive action and not to answer allegations of possibly criminal behavior.

Mandela was dragged through apartheid's courts for years until 1963, when he was sentenced to life imprisonment for fighting white rule.

After his release in 1990, he endured the indignity of cross-examination about his sex life and the loneliness of his failing marriage when he sought a divorce from his adulterous wife, Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, in 1996.

The present case has been brought by the South African Rugby Football Union (SARFU) to contest the inquiry into its operations.

Lawyers for SARFU say that Mandela neglected his duties by merely rubber-stamping Sports Minister Steve Tshwete's request for a judicial commission of inquiry.

They also allege that Tshwete is waging a vendetta against rugby boss Louis Luyt.

The government denies the charge and says allegations of mismanagement in the sport are a matter of public concern and that the commission should be allowed to proceed.

Montand's love child watches his exhumation

PARIS (AP) -- She just wanted the chance to see him one last time, but the woman who claims to be the love child of the late crooner Yves Montand was in for a disappointment.

Aurelie Drossart watched Wednesday night as authorities exhumed Montand's body from his grave at Pere Lachaise cemetery to determine if she really is his 24-year-old daughter.

At Montand's death in 1991, she said "I wasn't able to see him." But after the exhumation she told French television yesterday "I didn't expect this. I expected to recognize him and be able to say goodbye." Montand died at 70 of a massive heart attack, three days before he was to testify in the lawsuit that Drossart and her mother

Anne waged to prove the relation and justify Aurelie's right to the singer's inheritance.

Four years ago, a Paris court concluded that Montand was Drossart's father.

Amiel and Allegret did not attend the exhumation. Their lawyer, Dominique Pivnicia, said the two women found the measure appalling.

"This is an absolute horror for my clients," Pivnicia said in an interview with the Paris newspaper Liberation. "The family's peace has not been respected." Coroners removed the corpse from its resting place at Pere Lachaise shortly after dusk on Wednesday. A tent installed above the tomb Wednesday morning prevented the curious from snapping photos.

In deep sorrow we announce the passing
of our beloved husband, father, grandfather

LOUIS GOLDMAN ז"ל

Funeral today Friday, March 13, 1998
at Eretz Hachaim Cemetery, Beit Shemesh, at 2:30 p.m.

Muriel Goldman
Rika and Zaiman Deutsch
Ian and Donna Goldman

Simone and Matthew Simpson
Elise and Murray Meller
Grandchildren

In deep sorrow we announce the passing of our
beloved father and grandfather

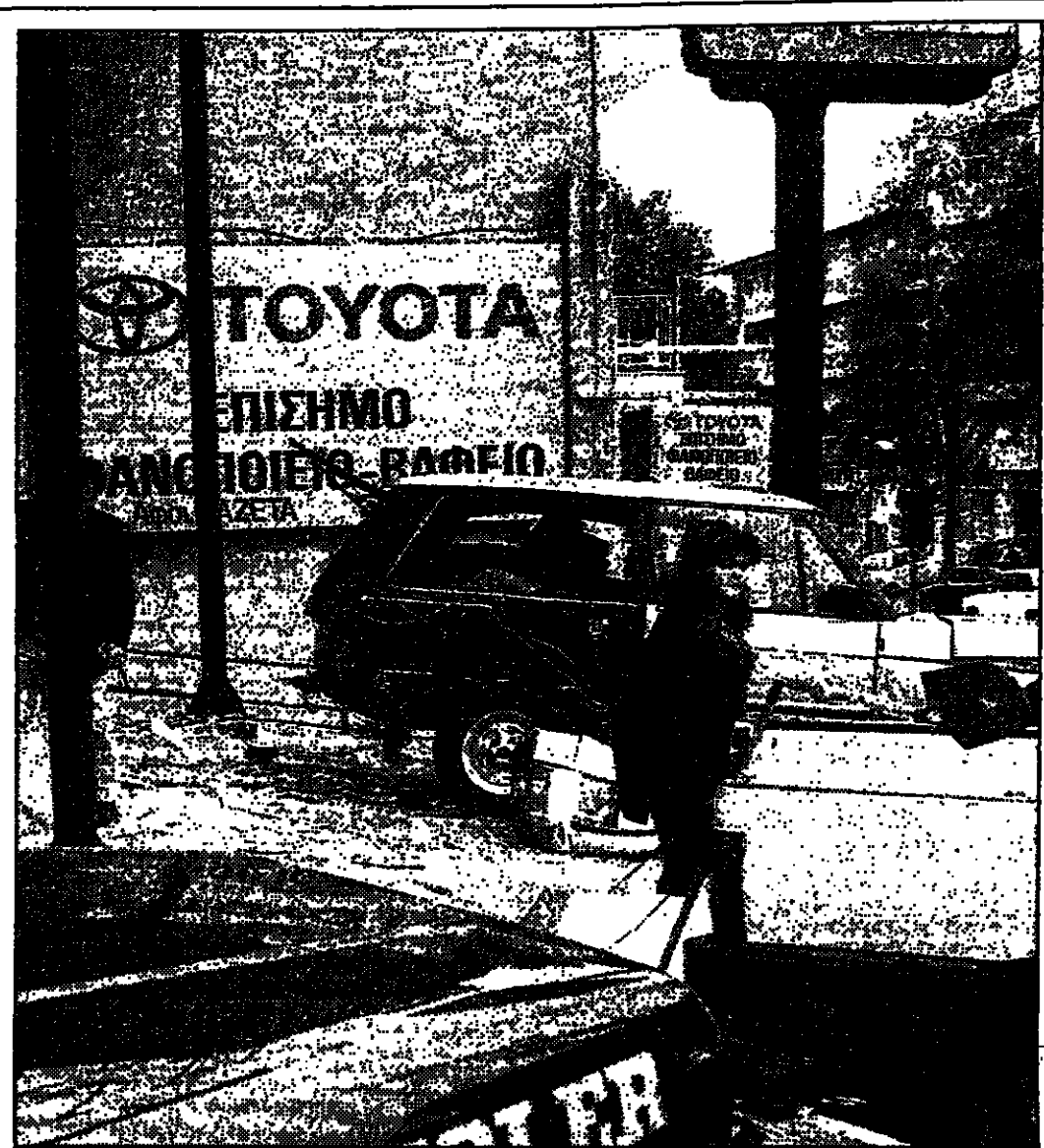
NACHUM (Nathan) REITER

The funeral will take place today, March 13, 1998,
at the Kiryat Malachi Cemetery, leaving from the
Vishnitz Parent's Home in Bnei Brak.

For exact times please call 04-825-3233

Son, Allen Reiter and family
Daughter, Brindel Liberman and family
Daughter, Suri Karasik and family
Son, David Reiter and family

Shiva at the home of Allen Reiter, 13 Rehov Laskov,
Ramat Gola, Haifa.



Greek bombing

Employees at an Athens Chrysler dealership clean up after a bomb exploded outside the premises yesterday. Another bomb wrecked an Opel/General Motors dealer a few minutes earlier.

(AP)

Danish premier's reelection bodes well for EU expansion

By PETER STARCK

COPENHAGEN (Reuters) -- Danish Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen said yesterday his center-left government would remain in office and that its economic policy would remain unchanged.

Rasmussen's victory increases the likelihood of a "yes" vote in Denmark's May 28 referendum on European Union enlargement, and that and the promise of continuing tight fiscal policies boosted Danish bond prices.

Social Democrat Rasmussen's coalition parties and allies surprised pollsters by snatching a razor-thin, one-seat victory in Wednesday's general election.

The center-left parties and their allies ended with the support of 90 deputies in the new parliament, while the opposition center-right bloc has 89.

Rasmussen's victory was confirmed at the last minute by the election of center-left supporters in two of the four seats filled by Denmark's North Atlantic territories of Greenland and the Faroe Islands.

"I told the queen of the result of yesterday's election and said that I intend to continue as prime minister of this government," Rasmussen said outside the royal palace after an audience with the monarch.

"I want the present economic policy to continue. There will not be any slackening," he told reporters.

Rasmussen came to power in January 1993 and was re-elected in September 1994.

For Wednesday's snap election, which he called three weeks ago, he campaigned on a pledge to maintain Denmark's stability-oriented economic and fiscal policies.

He also said he intended to keep the Nordic country's liberal immigration rules intact, despite growing support for a new far-right anti-immigration party.

The election saw a surge of support for the ultra-nationalist Danish People's Party, which wooed voters with the slogan a "Denmark for the Danes". It won 13 seats compared with just four in the old house.

Rasmussen stressed that a bigger challenge lay ahead.

The new government must prepare for May's EU referendum. EU leaders have been watching anxiously to see who will be in power to handle that vote.

"The most important task of all is now to secure a 'yes' in the Amsterdam Treaty referendum on May 28," Rasmussen said late on Wednesday.

The treaty, which opens the way for enlargement of the 15-member

union and a common policy on asylum and refugees, must be ratified by all EU countries before it can take effect.

Denmark threw Europe into turmoil in 1992 when its voters rejected the Maastricht Treaty on monetary union.

Danes approved the charter the following year having won opt-outs from the single currency and joint defence.

Before the election, political analysts said a center-right government could have reduced the chances of securing a "yes" in the referendum.

A Gallup poll released on Wednesday showed rising support among Danes for the Amsterdam Treaty. The poll put the "yes" camp at 48 percent, up from 45 percent in a March 9 survey.

Opponents advanced to 32 percent from 27.

Opinion polls before the election had forecast a slim but clear victory for the opposition center-right.

The Gallup institute said its surveys had been accurate but that some voters had changed their minds at the very last stage.

Danish bonds cheered the election results and outperformed firmer German Bunds. Investment bank Lehman Brothers said in a market commentary that the election outcome was positive for the bond market.

France won't extradite '60s guru to US

PARIS (Reuters) -- The Supreme Court has confirmed France will not extradite 1960s counter-culture guru Ira Einhorn to the US, where he faces life in prison for the murder of his girlfriend, justice officials said on Friday.

The high court ruling, which cannot be appealed, was handed down on March 4 but went unnoticed by the media at the time.

The French state prosecutor had appealed against an earlier lower court decision refusing to send Einhorn back to the US.

Einhorn's lawyers had argued that extradition would be unfair because he would not get a new trial in the US, where he was sentenced in his absence. Under French law he would have the right to a retrial.

The Pennsylvania General Assembly on January 21 passed special legislation granting Einhorn a new trial in hopes of persuading French authorities to extradite him.

Einhorn, 57, jumped bail 17 years ago before his trial for the 1977 murder of his girlfriend,

Helen "Holly" Maddux, whose mummified body was found stuffed into a trunk in his Philadelphia apartment in 1979. Einhorn had insisted he was not guilty, saying he was framed.

He was convicted in absentia and sentenced to life in prison in 1993. But he remained a fugitive until last June, when French authorities captured him in southwest France.

The French Supreme Court ruled that the lower court decision not to extradite was in accordance with the law.

honest p...

Column One

James O'Connell

Fourth official

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Finest honest phonies

"He's not going. Period!" That looks like the end of a story, before you even know what we're talking about. It's about "Charestmania" — and probably you still are no wiser, unless you are Canadian.

Schizophrenic French-speaking Canadians are lumbering towards another one of those interminable referendums on whether they want to be Canada, or Quebec and Canada. In a rare groundswell of unanimity, it seems all the rest of Canada thinks it has found a goodly Sir Galahad to send forth into the separatist dragon's den to rescue the fair maiden of unity from lecherous Gallic paws.

The knight is Jean Charest, leader of the federal Conservative Party, and the knight says no, he's not going to Quebec. At least his spokeswoman firmly said no, period, a week ago today.

Today, that period has a comma-like demeanor. For the past week Canadian intellectuals, media mavens and politicians of all stripes have been whipping up this frenzy, so-called Charestmania, to impress upon Charest that his mighty sword alone can rescue the nation from disaster.

Call of the wild

Charest took over the leadership of the Conservatives after their own great disaster of 1993, when voters slashed their presence in the House of Commons to a derisive two seats.

Now Canadians want him to move out of federal politics and into the dragon-snapping provincial fray of Quebec, to lead the pro-unity Quebec Liberal Party into battle against the separatists.

Who ever heard of a politician who can resist the call of a nation, the beckoning of shadowy future historians, the ringing phones from talk-show hosts? But so far Charest has stoutly resisted the call — an honest "no" in a phony crisis. Or is that a phony "no" in an honest crisis?

The Quebec vacancy arose two weeks ago when a person of singular invisibility, the Daniel Johnson, quit the Quebec Liberal Party leadership. Opinion polls showed he would be trashed in elections by the blazing separatist standard-bearer, Quebec Premier Lucien Bouchard — mainly because voters didn't appear to know who Johnson was.

Canadians were astounded to discover from other polls that Charest, not even entered in any upcoming Quebec contest, would beat Bouchard by around 50 points to 40. The big guns have since been wheeled up to the federal barricades to encourage Charest to lead the charge to Quebec.

His Conservative party colleagues have urged him to sacrifice the leadership "for Canada." One can scarcely avoid a cynical smile when ambitious politicians urge the boss to throw himself off a cliff named Greater Vision.

That gal again

Former Conservative prime minister Brian Mulroney urged him to go for the Quebec job. "Only Charest has the stature to

take on Bouchard," thundered both the *Toronto Star* and the *Globe and Mail* in near unison.

As the roar from the stadium grew louder, into Canada ambled Madeleine Albright on the first official visit by a US secretary of state for 10 years. Albright called for a "strong and united Canada." In case anyone missed the message in translation, she said it in her fluent French, in Hull, a Quebec town on the other

side of the river from Ottawa, the federal capital.

It was beginning to look like Federal Unity Week. More like PU week, said federalists who noted that she watered the message down with a lot of however's about non-interference, Canadian internal issue, free choices, etc.

Maybe Canada could invite Albright to become an honorary citizen — her French far surpasses that of Lloyd Axworthy, her Canadian counterpart, and most of the federal cabinet. (Albright did stumble slightly in a speech over the French word for "hypothetical." Axworthy helpfully whispered *hypothétique* — which is a mortgage. Albright gave him a thin "gee thanks" smile before sailing on with the correct *hypothétique*.)

New deal, big deal

Albright's French spice could not disguise the underlying blandness of the American message. The United States once fought a horrendous civil war for its own union, so exactly where does it stand on Canadian unity?

"No big deal," is how many Canadians interpret Washington's policy.

The charitable view probably is that Washington does not want to inflame Gallic passions in Quebec by appearing to wade in on the side of its Anglo buddies — and that is a very wise policy indeed. Woe to the best friend who opts for one side in a shaky marriage.

The Canadian media quickly brushed aside Albright's visit and returned to the furious "he, won't he?" debate about Charest taking up the Crusader sword in defense of the true faith of federation.

In Quebec, the Liberal Party headquarters was chortling with glee yesterday on news that Charest was wavering. (He said he would discuss it with his hometown constituents today. They care.)

His indecision will be no handicap if he reverses the "no." Commentators were kindly calling it "political maturity."

Premier Bouchard declined to comment on Charest, but said with a disdainful Gallic sniff that he would be happy to face "any Liberal leader." Of course he wouldn't prefer a Liberal loser, of course not.

Canada's own Mark Twain, the novelist William Ormond Mitchell, died last month. Once, when asked to sum up what he and the poet Al Purdy meant to Canada, he said: "We are Canada's two finest honest phonies."

Somehow the quote seemed apt this week for Messieurs Charest et Bouchard.

Albanians boycott Serb peace team

By JOOVAN KOVACIC

PRISTINA, Serbia (Reuters) — A Serbian delegation arrived in Kosovo on Thursday for surprise talks with ethnic Albanians on the future of the troubled province, but called them off when the other side failed to show up.

The four-member Serbian team was led by Deputy Prime Minister Ratko Markovic. The talks had been announced late on Wednesday only hours after Belgrade ruled out any dialogue unless the Albanians dropped demands for independence.

Ethnic Albanian leaders were taken completely by surprise by what Belgrade called "an open invitation to talks" — a response to a crisis triggered by the death of 80 people last week in a Serbian police crackdown on alleged Kosovo separatists.

After arriving at the government building in the provincial capital Pristina at the scheduled time of 11 a.m. (1000 GMT), the delegation waited briefly alone inside before Markovic called off the talks, saying: "It takes two for discussions."

He said, however, that the delegation would stay in town until Friday and was ready for talks at any time.

"If the absence of the other side is for technical reasons, this can be overcome as early as tomorrow, because we will be here, we repeat our invitation for a dialogue and we are at their disposal," he told reporters.

Fehmi Agani, the vice-president of the leading Albanian party, the LDK, had dismissed Belgrade's offer as "a mockery of a dialogue."

"The government in Belgrade does not in fact wish to engage in meaningful dialogue. In this way, Serbia wants to play-act as if it was willing to do that," he said in a statement issued late on Wednesday.

Another Albanian leader, Adem Demaci of the PPK party, said there could be no dialogue with Belgrade without an outside mediator, preferably from the United States, because "we cannot trust the Serb side."

Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic is under severe pressure from the international community to start a dialogue with the Kosovo Albanians because of fears that their quest for independence could trigger conflict across the region.

Western powers imposed sanctions on Belgrade earlier this week and threatened tougher ones, including a freeze on Serbian assets abroad, if there was no progress towards a dialogue by March 25.

However, local ethnic Albanians said it would have been extremely hard for their leaders to meet Serbian ministers less than 24 hours after the Albanian community buried several dozen victims of last week's police operation.

The Kosovo Albanians are due to hold elections on March 22, though these are not recognised by Belgrade.

Markovic told reporters before the talks: "We have come here with an open mind to start a dialogue with the Albanians on all pressing issues without any preconditions. But the framework must be within the Yugoslav and Serbian constitutions and international norms."

"I won't go into the issues and manner of dialogue in order not to prejudice anything; all these issues remain open for a dialogue, an equal dialogue."

On Wednesday the Serbian government had ruled out any dialogue after the LDK said it would agree to nothing short of full independence — anathema to Belgrade which regards Kosovo as the cradle of Serbian culture.

The exchange came as ethnic Albanian villagers exhumed the bodies of relatives killed in fighting last week and began the grisly task of identifying and burying them with Muslim rites.

Serbian police and firemen had buried the unclaimed remains on Tuesday without ceremony after the victims' families refused to take them until they had been examined by international pathologists.

In a statement published by an Albanian-language newspaper on Wednesday the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), main target of the police crackdown, said it would continue its armed struggle against Serb security forces in the province and called on "international centres to recognise the state of Kosovo."

Western countries have told the Kosovo Albanians they will not support demands for independence, but are urging Belgrade to restore the province's autonomy which it suspended in 1989.



Ratko Markovic (left), Serbia's deputy prime minister and chief negotiator for Kosovo, and negotiator Andreja Milosavljevic wait for Albanian representatives to come to talks in Pristina yesterday. (AP)

Adams seeking Sinn Fein return to peace talks

By ROSEMARY BENNETT

LONDON, (Reuters) — Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams said after talks on Thursday with British Prime Minister Tony Blair that he wanted his party to return to Northern Irish peace talks as soon as possible.

Adams said he was deeply committed to finding a settlement to the troubles in Northern Ireland, but would have to consult other party leaders before making a final decision whether to rejoin the negotiations.

"My own view is that we should seek to go back into the talks at the earliest possible opportunity. But that is not a decision for me alone. We are a collective leadership. We will consult," the nationalist leader told reporters after an hour-long meeting with Blair.

Sinn Fein, which like its Irish Republican Army guerrilla wing, wants an end to British rule of Northern Ireland, was expelled from the talks for 18 days after

police linked the IRA with two killings in the province.

"We are deeply committed to finding a real, a lasting and an enduring settlement. No matter how difficult or dangerous or disagreeable that might be, we all have to do our best," Adams added.

Sinn Fein leaders had said they wanted a meeting with Blair before deciding whether to rejoin the process.

The British and Irish governments hope the peace talks will yield the outline of a settlement by Easter, just four weeks away, to end a quarter of a century of sectarian conflict in Northern Ireland that have claimed more than 3,200 lives.

"We believe it could all be sorted out relatively quickly and we want to be part of sorting it out," Adams later told Sky Television.

The two governments plan to put any agreement to voters north and south of the border in late May.

An early return by Sinn Fein to the talks would be a considerable

boost to the process, although leading unionists have accused the British government of caving in to guerrilla violence.

Unionists are committed to keeping Northern Ireland under British rule and fear the peace settlement will give the Irish government a say in how the province is run.

Blair will meet David Trimble, leader of Northern Ireland's biggest pro-British group, the Ulster Unionist party, at 1800 GMT on Thursday to urge his party to keep working towards an Easter settlement.

Before the meeting, a leading negotiator from the party, Jeffrey Donaldson, protested that Britain was bowing to republican violence and warned that prospects for a talks agreement were fading.

He said Blair was reviving ideas "which they know are totally unacceptable to unionists."

He told BBC radio: "We believe that the government's retreat to that position is a direct result of

the violence and the threats of the IRA, and it is also about bringing the Sinn Fein boycott of the talks to an end." He accused Sinn Fein, the moderate nationalist Social Democratic and Labor Party and the Irish government of pressing for a powerful all-Ireland political institution over which any future Northern Ireland elected assembly would have little say.

"I have to say that the chances of agreement are slipping away because those in the nationalist community, such as Sinn Fein and the SDLP, are upping the ante." Adams was flying to the United States later on Thursday for a series of meetings with business leaders and politicians, and to celebrate St Patrick's Day on March 17, Ireland's national day.

Fourth official commits suicide in Japan scandal

By MARTIN FACKLER

TOKYO (AP) — A Finance Ministry official hanged himself Thursday, becoming the fourth Japanese official to commit suicide in a widening scandal over corruption in high places. Meanwhile, the head of Japan's central bank

offered to resign to take responsibility for Wednesday's arrest of a bank official on suspicion of accepting lavish entertainment in return for leaking sensitive information to two private banks.

Yoshio Sugiyama, 46, a deputy chief in the ministry's powerful banking bureau, hanged himself in

his Tokyo apartment, said Naoto Fujii, a spokesman for the Tokyo Metropolitan Police.

National broadcaster NHK reported that Sugiyama had worked in 1991 as an inspector alongside two ministry officials arrested in January on suspicion of accepting entertainment worth at

least 4.8 million yen (\$37,500) from banks in exchange for tips about "surprise" inspections.

The press has speculated that two of the previous suicides may have been desperate attempts to prevent the scandal from tainting other colleagues. The head of Japan's highway authority killed

himself in January as prosecutors investigated his agency after arresting a subordinate for allegedly accepting bribes from Nomura Securities Co. Days later, a ministry official hanged himself just as he was about to be questioned about receiving lavish entertainment from banks.

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Support the Iraqi people

The problem with UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's agreement with Saddam Hussein is that Saddam paid no price for bringing the US to the brink of war and for gaining a four-month break in inspections. Now it looks as if Saddam could pay an even greater price than a military attack, if the US Congress succeeds in its attempted overhaul of policy toward Iraq.

Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott leads a group of senators proposing a \$38 million assistance package for the Iraqi opposition. The package may take some time to become law, but its significance lies less in the actual funds than as a signal Washington is once again rethinking its attitude toward the Iraqi opposition.

Successive US administrations have shown that hatred of Saddam does not translate into support for his opponents. The first and most tragic example of this disjunction was during the Gulf War itself, when the US deliberately did not destroy Saddam's helicopter gunships, which were then used to put down massive revolts in the North and South.

Subsequently, the Bush administration switched tacks again and began a two-pronged covert strategy of supporting the democratic opposition to Saddam, called the Iraqi National Congress, and groups of exiled Iraqi military officers seeking to remove Saddam by coup. The Clinton administration inherited and continued this covert policy, and soon the INC became strong enough to seriously threaten Saddam's regime.

In August 1996, seeing that the INC had succeeded in inducing growing numbers of military units to defect, Saddam sensed a mortal threat to his regime and invaded the North with tanks. Once again, the US abandoned the opposition by revoking its promise of air support. The US then turned exclusive attention to what evidently had been its preferred option all along — a military coup. Subsequent US-backed coup plots were easily infiltrated by Saddam, resulting in their miserable failure and the execution of dozens of officers.

It is only now, in the aftermath of the recent crisis and the non-attack on Iraq, that the option of supporting the democratic Iraqi opposition has come to the fore again. The Clinton administration has said repeatedly that depriving Saddam of his deadly arsenal is a paramount national security interest of the United States, one for which it is willing to take massive military action. But all of the avenues previously taken to achieve this end — bombings, inspec-

tions, and coup attempts — have proven to be dead ends.

While Annan's agreement has kept the inspection regime alive, chances are that soon it will reach the same dead end it reached before Saddam's son-in-law defected, revealing much of what the inspectors were missing.

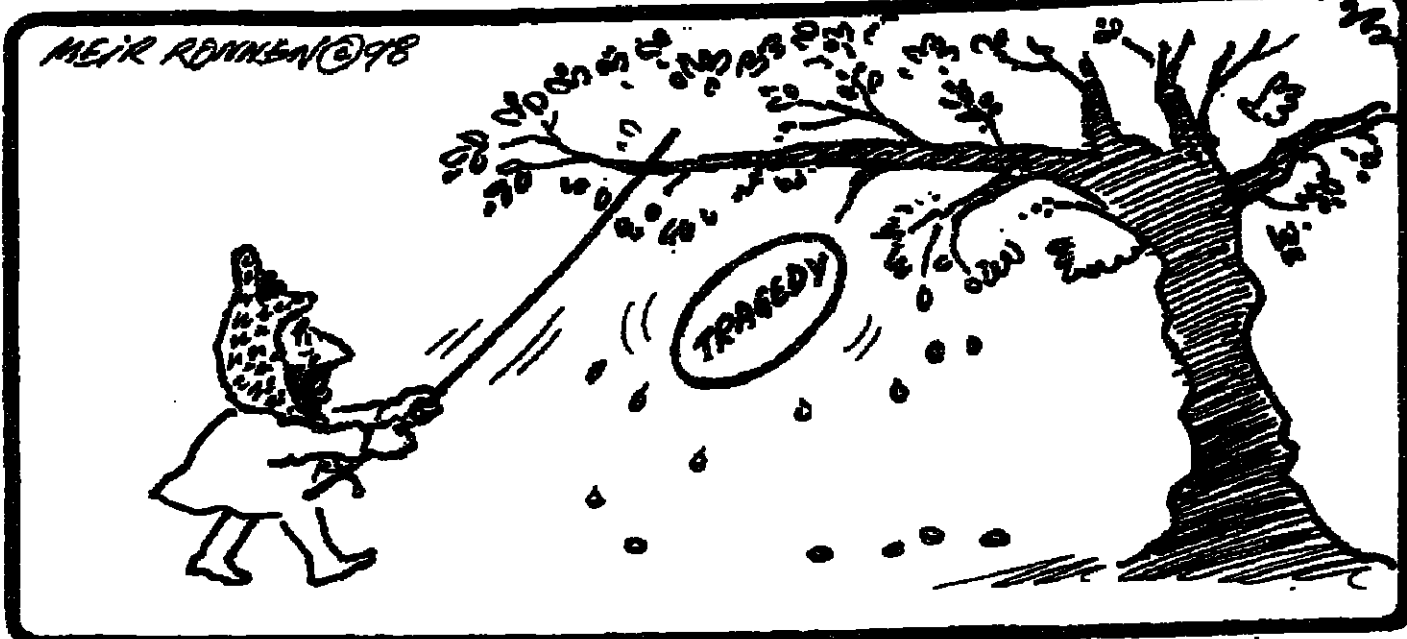
When the inspectors got too close to something, Saddam created the recent crisis and bought himself months to hide things again. Barring another high-level defection, Saddam could well ensure that inspections come up dry, and create an almost irresistible momentum towards the lifting of sanctions.

The US Congress is coming to the conclusion that the right and only way out of this predicament is to support the Iraqi people against Saddam. A number of concrete steps can be taken: lift the sanctions on the zones outside of Saddam's control, recognize a provisional government of free Iraq, and make some of the \$1.6 billion in frozen Iraqi assets available to the provisional government.

The funds to be appropriated by the Congress are a first step, but it is the administration that must decide to stop putting its eggs in one basket. No policy based solely on inspections can succeed — as Secretary of Defense William Cohen so effectively dramatized with a 5-pound bag of sugar — small amounts of biological weapons can kill thousands.

Many countries possess chemical weapons; Saddam has not only used them, but has done so against his own people. Even if he were no threat to the region, his monstrous human rights record alone would justify assistance to the democratic opposition.

The Congress must shame the administration into jettisoning the continued bureaucratic preference for a "neat" military coup rather than a democratic revolution — presumably on the theory that only a dictator can keep Iraq from breaking up. If there were no democratic opposition in Iraq then perhaps such a cynical policy might be justified. But the INC is a viable, broad-based opposition movement with a plausible plan for a limited central government that builds on an Iraqi tradition of local autonomy. The INC has demonstrated its ability to garner support inside Iraq. Without a single American infantry soldier or a massive bombing campaign, the INC has a chance to win. The inspection card should be played as long and as effectively as possible, but it is no substitute for getting to the root of the problem, which is Saddam himself.



Three gambles that failed

MOSHE ARENS

When the government of a neighboring country is unable or unwilling to impose its control over irregular military forces operating in the border region, there is bound to be trouble.

The US experienced this problem back in 1915 when Pancho Villa conducted raids into New Mexico from his base in northern Mexico, and it is a problem that Israel has been wrestling with since the PLO, the Hizbullah and Amal established their bases in southern Lebanon. The problem on the US-Mexican border was quickly solved when president Woodrow Wilson sent Gen. John Pershing on a punitive expedition into Mexico. The problem on the Israeli-Lebanese border has been with us for over 20 years.

After every incident involving Israeli casualties, calls are heard for a unilateral withdrawal from the security zone, as if the cause of the trouble was the IDF presence and not Hizbullah. Some tend to forget that the problems on the northern border began before the security zone was established, and that the reason it was established was to provide some measure of protection for the civilian population in the Galilee.

Sorrow over our fallen soldiers and impatience with the seemingly endless bloodletting are behind these counsels of despair that, in effect, ask of the government to gamble with the security of the civilians living in the North by

abandoning the security zone in the hope that Hizbullah will then cease its military activities against Israel. As a matter of fact, on three occasions in the past Israeli governments decided to gamble in Lebanon in the hope that the Hizbullah could be depended on to restrain itself or to comply with understandings that had been

advantage of the fact that northern Israel was now within range, it attacked Kiryat Shmona, Metulla, and the Western Galilee whenever it seemed to suit its purpose. Whatever deterrence Israel might have possessed after Operation Peace for Galilee evaporated due to the absence of an adequate response to the shelling.

Israel limited its moves against Hizbullah, but Hizbullah keeps firing Katyushas

reached These gambles did not pay off.

In 1985 the national unity government, led at the time by Shimon Peres, decided by a majority vote to redeploy the IDF into a narrow security zone, that for the first time since Operation Peace for Galilee again put the towns and settlements in the Galilee within range of Katyusha rockets. The decision was taken amid calls to extricate ourselves from the "Lebanese quagmire" in the hope of putting an end to the casualties suffered by the IDF.

HIZBULLAH continued its attacks against the IDF, but refrained from launching Katyushas against Israel for seven years, evidently deterred by the response it expected to such attacks. But thereafter, taking

On two occasions, after heavy barrages of Katyushas, the IDF responded with artillery and aerial attacks against Hizbullah targets beyond the security zone. On both occasions the IDF's response was terminated by an "agreement" reached with Hizbullah.

After Operation Accountability, the government gambled on Hizbullah adhering to an arrangement whereby it would desist from shelling Israeli civilian targets. But renewed Katyusha attacks on the Galilee were followed by Operation Grapes of Wrath, in which it became clear that the air force and artillery alone are not sufficient to put an end to the Katyushas.

At this point Israel took the third gamble, arriving at an agreement with Hizbullah according to which neither side would attack civilian

targets. In effect, this agreement severely constrained the IDF's ability to fight Hizbullah. While Hizbullah continued to operate from its bases in the Shi'ite villages in southern Lebanon, the IDF was committed to not attacking these villages.

Israel limited its moves against Hizbullah in fear that the Hizbullah response would be Katyusha shelling of the Galilee. Just to rub it in, Hizbullah resumed Katyusha attacks whenever it claimed that Israel had violated the "agreement." With these kind of handicaps even the IDF is not likely to succeed.

The third gamble has also not paid off. Is it now reasonable to assume that Hizbullah, pledged to the "liberation of Jerusalem" and urged on by its Iranian and Syrian patrons, will cease its activity against Israeli targets once the IDF has withdrawn from the security zone? That the Syrians will not encourage Hizbullah to cause Israeli civilian casualties after the withdrawal in the hope that inflicting this pain will get Israel to agree to leave the Golan Heights?

This is not to imply that the present situation, where the Galilee is in range of Katyushas and the IDF is severely restricted by an agreement long ago broken by Hizbullah, represents the best possible alternative. Actually, it may be one of the worst.

The writer is a former foreign and defense minister.

A salute to women and peace

NAOMI CHAZAN

International Women's Day has once again come and gone. Many activities and publications highlighted vital issues relating to gender equality — violence against women, discrimination in the workplace, problems of personal status, underrepresentation of women in the public sphere, the perpetuation of stereotypes — as well as some notable successes, especially the new laws on sexual harassment and the establishment of a National Authority on the Status of Women.

The most significant achievement of women, however, has been virtually ignored: the pivotal role of women in the struggle for peace.

The past year has been marked by a rapid and worrisome deterioration in the peace process. The total deadlock in negotiations with the Palestinians and the dimming of prospects for the resumption of talks with Syria have caused considerable disarray in the peace camp. The only new voices that have emerged with clarity and conviction in the past year have been those of women.

Immediately after the Hebron Agreement was signed, a group of women — mothers of combat soldiers — came together to create a new movement, Women against War. Twelve months ago, following the helicopter crash that killed 73 soldiers, another new initiative — Four Mothers — spearheaded the call for withdrawal from Lebanon.

This past summer, a group of Orthodox women founded Women for the Sanctity of Life. Mizrahi women have organized peace activities in development towns and low-income neighborhoods.

celebrated its 10th anniversary: Bat Shalom, the Israeli partner of the Palestinian-Israeli Women's Joint Venture for Peace, the Jerusalem Link, cosponsored a major new project, "Sharing Jerusalem: Two Capitals for Two States." And every Friday, women stand at 47 crossroads throughout the country to promote the cause of peace.

THE new generation of women's peace movements is particularly varied and heterogeneous. More importantly, the initiatives of these groups are primarily newcomers to public activity. Most have been propelled into the political arena by motives quite different from those of their male counterparts: they have mobilized themselves and others to protest against

unnecessary risks and dangers, to prevent avoidable disaster, and — by extension — to refocus attention and energy on the value of human life and the need to bring an end to war.

For this reason, these new women's peace efforts, much like those of the established women's groups, are characterized by persistence, dedication and commitment. While the mainstream peace camp maintains a low profile when

These groups' political voices may still seem somewhat hesitant and unformed. The experience of more established women's peace movements, however, strongly suggests that they will gradually define a political platform that will continue to pioneer the orientations of a progressive Israeli society. Women's peace groups were the first to call for direct negotiations with the PLO, for a two-state solution, and for sharing Jerusalem.

These new groups represent a delicate, yet extremely accurate, seismograph of the future agenda of the country. One can expect their concern with the need for a negotiated peace and for a redefinition of domestic priorities to be translated into concrete political terms by other parts of Israeli society in the months ahead.

Unfortunately, the power of extraparlimentary women's action has not yet been expressed in the formal negotiating process. Perhaps that is one of the reasons for its ineffectiveness. But many Israeli and Palestinian women have proven during the course of this year that their will and their courage have been indispensable in sustaining the desire for peace among both of their peoples.

For maintaining this hope and working tirelessly towards its achievement, they deserve to be applauded on this International Women's Day.

The writer, a Merez MK, is a deputy speaker of the Knesset.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE VIEW FROM EGYPT

Sir, — Lutfi el-Khouli, a star political writer, will indeed be hounded by fellow intellectuals when he returns from his visit with Israeli peace activists ("Swimming against the stream," Mar. 6).

As a steady reader of *Al-Ahram* weekly, I correctly anticipated that he would be loaded with advice for Israel and wouldn't have a word of advice for the Palestinians. He says Egyptians have changed — they are prepared to "accept Israel as a natural... Middle East state, not a Western state." Read *Al-Ahram* and you will find that what Egyptian intellectuals "accept" for Israel is hardly a state.

President Mubarak routinely explains that he can't do anything about the vicious anti-Jewish, anti-Israel stance of the Egyptian press because that's freedom of the press. As is clear from el-Khouli, the press correctly presents the Egyptian intellectual outlook: not exactly good news for the peace process. This expressed attitude inhibits Israeli risk-taking with the Palestinians.

The nasty homecoming which el-Khouli faces is an ample indicator of what's going on in Egypt. His work is cut out for him. Will he take on the challenge or will he, garbed in a peace cloak, continue bashing Israel?

DR. JOSEPH LERNER
Jerusalem.

REASSURING

Sir, — Two-thirds (66 per cent) of the Jewish population of Israel believe that "the Palestinians want to see Israel obliterated," while only a quarter (26 per cent) think "that in the final analysis the Palestinians want to live in peace with Israel." — so reveals a Gallup Poll conducted among a representative sample of 500 adults last month.

This is a dramatic and frightening revelation, coming four and a half years after the historic announcement of the Oslo agreement. Something is awfully wrong. Maybe the 500 adult Jewish Israelis polled weren't really a fair sample. Maybe they were unduly influenced by the

WHAT'S GOOD FOR THE PALESTINIANS

Sir, — Daoud Kutub would be right about Israeli paternalism (Mar. 8) — and we'd be well advised to depend on the Palestinian Arabs to tell us what's good for themselves — if it weren't for two problems. First, now more than ever, their press is under the thumb of their local terror squads so it must be difficult for them to form educated opinions. And second,

Sir, — Rabbi Yehuda Amital's statement (February 24), "There is no suitable expression for anyone who believes in both the peace process and religious Zionism" assumes that those who do not support the Oslo plan do not want peace.

That is entirely wrong. Oslo was not about "peace" but the creation of a Palestinian state which it was

tension over Iraqi terror-weapons or Palestinian popular support for Saddam Hussein. Most likely the 500 weren't properly educated by Shimon Peres and Yossi Beilin since September 1993.

It was patently unfair to ask Israelis what they think the Palestinians want to happen to Israel, because they are voicing their perceptions about Palestinian desires. Shouldn't Gallup ask the Palestinians if they really want to see Israel destroyed? The results should be far more reassuring — shouldn't they?

JIM BENNETT
Haifa.

WE ALL WANT PEACE

and, if they do form opinions and those opinions displease the doddering sadist who is the self-appointed Palestinian-in-chief, they can be jailed, tortured, and killed.

This, I make bold to say, is not good for the Palestinian Arabs.

MARK L. LEVINSON
Herzliya.

naively hoped) would bring about peace.

Every Jew wants peace — every single one of us. To suggest anything else is dishonest and insulting. Differences of opinion are no reason to belittle others. Isn't that what Torah is all about?

DR. MOSHE DANN
Jerusalem.

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

65 years ago: There was no newspaper on March 13, but on March 14, 1933, *The Palestine Post* asked the question: "Are the German Jews still German citizens or not?"

According to the statement made by Herr Goehring, Chief of the Berlin police, they were not.

But in contrast to this statement, the President of Munich, Herr Himmler, described as one Hitler's closest friends, was reported as having said that "citizens of Jewish faith are equal to other German citizens."

25 years ago: On March 13,

1973, *The Jerusalem Post* reported that the Knesset had decided late at night in a dramatic and often bitter session by a vote of 51 to 28 that city mayors and regional chairmen would not be voted into office by direct elections.

Alexander Zvielli

Joe Weiss

Start separation now

GERALD STEINBERG

The week's tragic incident that left three Palestinians dead at an IDF checkpoint outside Hebron highlights the necessity of separation between the two peoples. The friction and tension resulting from the combination of Israeli fears of terrorism resulting from the presence of tens of thousands of Palestinian workers, and the Palestinian reaction to Israeli security measures, create immense stresses.

This was not a case of premeditated murder, but clearly the result of these stresses and the overall situation. The Palestinian driver, perhaps tired of the long wait to cross the military checkpoint that divides the areas under Israeli and Palestinian control, jumped the queue and attempted to cross.

The army was on alert in response to warnings of Hamas terror attacks, including reports of a planned suicide attack at such a crossing point. When the Palestinian attempted to drive through the checkpoint without stopping, and struck an Israeli guard, the other soldiers, fearing a terrorist attack, opened fire.

It is all too easy to blame the

would be employed within these areas. The need to cross IDF checkpoints would have been cut significantly.

SINCE the suicide bombings in Israeli cities two years ago, the peace process has been suspended; not quite dead, but certainly in a deep coma.

It is difficult to be optimistic under the existing circumstances, and hard to find a way out. Even the Americans have finally realized that pressing for continued Israeli withdrawals without substantial improvement in Palestinian implementation of their security and anti-terrorist obligations is a non-starter.

At the same time, the current situation, in which tens of thousands of Palestinians must cross into Israel daily to work, and in which each Palestinian must be checked to make sure that no explosives or weapons are being carried, is also untenable. For the Palestinians, the long waits to cross the checkpoints, and the often degrading security checks, are a source of consternation and anger. The closures that are imposed when intelligence

The time has come to reduce the dependence of the Palestinians on Israeli sources of employment

soldiers for being "too quick on the trigger," but given past experience, the intelligence warnings of a planned terrorist attack, and the abnormal behavior of the driver, their response is understandable. The primary cause is first and foremost the situation and tensions, and these are unavoidable as long as the threat of terrorism continues.

The response of the Israeli government was appropriate, including Prime Minister Netanyahu's public condolences to Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat and the investigation launched by the IDF. For their part, however, the Palestinian leadership seems to be more interested in reaping propaganda benefits from this tragedy. Unfortunately, they are finding it easy to get the foreign media to repeat the absurd claims that this was somehow a deliberate attack, and not the inevitable impact of the situation.

Although the Palestinians blame Israel, the fact is that no one is forcing the workers to enter Israel in search of jobs. If the PA would invest the same energies and resources in developing its own economy that it invests in its oversized "police" force and the villas on the Gaza coast, it could significantly reduce the number of workers that have to seek jobs in Israel. The corruption and twisted priorities keep the Palestinians dependent on Israel for employment.

From the Israeli perspective, the major achievement of the Oslo process was the reduction in the friction of between the IDF and the Palestinians. When the IDF withdrew from Gaza and the major Palestinian cities, the daily military patrols in these areas stopped, reducing the level of tension significantly. If the Palestinians had responded by stopping terrorism, this process would have continued. In addition, if they had built factories and created jobs, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians

information indicates planned terror attacks increase the sense of degradation. If they had alternative sources of income, they would surely prefer not to deal with the Israeli authorities.

Similarly, public opinion polls have shown that the vast majority of Israelis want separation, even if that means further withdrawal and an increase in the areas under the control of the PA. After years of Palestinian terrorism, these Israelis would prefer not to worry whether the workers at the nearby building site are carrying explosives.

The time has come to reduce the dependence of the Palestinians on Israeli sources of employment. Instead of general statements of intention, both sides need a fixed timetable, matching steps towards economic development and independence on the Palestinian side with a phased reduction of permits to work in Israel.

Within three years, the number of workers could be cut in half, and in five years, could end entirely. This will require massive assistance, particularly from the industrialized donor countries, and an end to the corruption in the PA.

Perhaps one day, after a sense of cooperation has been established, Palestinians and Israelis can meet on the basis of equality and mutual respect, without the fears and emotional responses that exist today.

At that stage, separation will no longer be necessary, and the movement of people across borders can take place freely. However, until then, without separation, this week's tragedy is likely to be repeated, with the possibility of even more violent responses and consequences for all.

The writer directs the program on arms control and non-proliferation at the BESA Center for Strategic Studies and heads the program on conflict resolution at Bar-Ilan University.



The tragedy of Tarkumiya

MARK A. HELLER

The surprising thing about the tragedy at the Tarkumiya roadblock that resulted in the death of three Palestinians is not that it happened, but that it doesn't happen more often. Anyone who has ever spent any time manning a roadblock knows that the potential for some kind of misunderstanding always exists.

New intelligence alerts are always being issued, and soldiers are constantly being warned to expect some kind of attack. As a result, the slightest departure from routine forces a reaction, often with only a split-second to decide what the proper response should be. Failing to react to a real threat can cost soldiers their own lives and the lives of others they are supposed to protect; overreacting to a false threat can cost the lives of innocent Palestinian travelers.

Given this difference, it is perhaps natural that those manning roadblocks should err on the side of caution when faced with a situation whose meaning is not immediately clear.

It is, of course, easy to be critical in retrospect and to say that the soldiers in this incident should have held their fire, or fired at the tires, or done anything other than what they did when a Palestinian driver lost control of his vehicle or took some other action that aroused their suspicion.

But that would be a cheap shot. The soldiers involved are as innocent of bad judgment and of malicious intent as were the drivers and passengers who were shot. It is the situation itself that should be blamed, and changed. And the responsibility for that falls neither on Israeli soldiers, whose standing orders can never provide perfect guidance for every contingency, or on Palestinian workers, who need to travel to and from Israel to feed their families. It falls on their political leaders.

The killings at Tarkumiya have reminded many people of another

incident that was also bound to happen, sooner or later. Eleven years ago in Gaza, another driver lost control of his vehicle. That driver was Israeli, but the victims, then as now, were Palestinians, killed when the runaway truck crashed into them.

That traffic accident was not the first involving Israelis and Palestinians, but it was the first to leave a historical legacy, because it precipitated demonstrations and riots that soon

The soldiers and the Palestinians involved were innocent, it is the situation which must be blamed

spread across the West Bank and Gaza and evolved into the intifada. THE superficial similarity between these events makes it almost impossible to avoid wondering whether the more recent incident will have a similar aftermath.

It is impossible to know the answer to this question. The overall atmosphere is so full of mistrust and ill will that nothing can be ruled out.

But the accident in 1987 did not cause the intifada; it was merely the spark that ignited a very combustible situation. And the very changes wrought by the intifada reduce the chances that the same sort of thing will happen again.

In 1987, Palestinians bore the double distress of economic retrenchment due to several years of declining oil prices (meaning reduced remittances from abroad and reduced opportunities in the Gulf labor markets) and political resentment due to the fact that the vast bulk of the Palestinian population was

under direct occupation by Israeli security forces. Economic problems have hardly disappeared, but there have been some signs of stabilization in recent years, despite interruptions caused by closures, and even some new pockets of prosperity.

More importantly, the direct occupation has, for most Palestinians, been replaced by indirect occupation, perhaps as objectionable but certainly less provocative. And between the population and the Israeli authorities there is now a Palestinian government, which is far better able to control the Palestinian street. This government may not object to some outbursts of violence, but it has no interest in the disintegration of public order and the privatization of power that would accompany a new intifada.

This means that history will probably not repeat itself the same way — it rarely does — and that the outbursts of Palestinian anger after the accident at Tarkumiya will not evolve the same way as did the outbursts of anger after the accident in Gaza.

But even if this reading of the situation is accurate, it is no cause for complacency. After all, a confrontation can assume a different character at the outskirts of Palestinian towns than in the center, without necessarily being less bloody.

And the other costs of political stalemate — including the danger of terrorism, the freezing of relations with the rest of the Arab world, and political tensions with other countries — remain high. Roadblocks may not cause the problem, but they are a graphic symbol of the broader Israeli-Palestinian relationship that makes them necessary.

Tarkumiya is not the first tragic consequence of that relationship, and unless the stalemate is broken, it will not be the last.

The writer is senior research associate at the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University.

Middle Israel

AMOTZ ASA-EL

Being there

Having learned that the exceptionally fertile mother of 22 he was interviewing on stage actually loved her energetic husband, Groucho Marx said he loved his cigar, "but I take it out every once in a while."

We, too, would do right to finally extract from our lungs that smoking, choking, cancer-growing mimicry of a tranquilizer called Lebanon. After decades of military wrestling, diplomatic intrusion, and economic tinkering, it has become tactically, strategically, and educationally imperative that we abandon our northern neighbors to their devices.

Tactically, most sensible people by now realize that our soldiers are unnecessarily exposed to a costly guerrilla war, while the refusenik of Damascus is apparently not interested in a peace treaty with Israel. He had his chance during the Rabin-Peres era, and chose to squander it.

Now, why wait for Hafez Assad to suddenly make do with Ariel Sharon's territorial generosity after having shunned Yossi Beilin's?

Moreover, if a deal with Israel should suit him, Assad would strike one regardless of Lebanon;

the threat they face isn't of military invasions but of terrorist attacks. But we all face that, and no one is stationing tank squadrons, paratroop platoons, or artillery batteries outside Dizengoff Center, the Hadera bus station, or the Ramat Gan diamond exchange.

Terrorist infiltrations are a challenge, but not one which is effectively thwarted by exposing a standing army to guerrilla stings. In fact, the reason Hizballah is not attacking settlements is not because it can't but because it doesn't want to.

Sheik Nasrallah has learned that in Western eyes killing soldiers is not only legitimate, but even admirable, particularly if they are occupiers. Pulling back would confront him and his colleagues with a simple choice: Stand up to their limited, liberate-Lebanon rhetoric, or attack Israel itself even when it's no longer occupying Lebanon.

If it is tempted to choose the latter, as it certainly might be, Hizballah will meet an IDF backed by a fist-waving Israeli consensus; and that is a far more potent asset than any non-Israeli hill, river, or proxy army.

To finally part with both military adventurism and pacific naïveté Israel should quit Lebanon now

and if he is not interested, why pit an inevitably cumbersome standing army against Hizballah's far more lightly equipped and conveniently semi-regular forces? It's the kind of war that effectively stung the mighty armies of the US in Vietnam, the USSR in Afghanistan, Germany in Yugoslavia, and the Seleucids in ancient Judea. The question, therefore, should not be how to win it, but how to avoid it.

Besides, a retreat in order to avoid guerrilla skirmishes doesn't mean defeat. When the US abandoned Vietnam conventional wisdom went that it had been defeated, but two decades later the Vietnamese came begging for American diplomatic and commercial ties; long-term, America won. Here too, a retreat would increase pressure on south Lebanese leaders to deal less with bombs and more with livelihood.

Strategically, to be sure, Israel gains nothing by occupying southern Lebanon. Our northern exposure started off as a battle against Yasser Arafat's troops following their ouster from Jordan. Since then, however, that foe has opted for diplomacy, and at any rate moved from the banks of the Litani and the peaks of the anti-Lebanon to the shores of Gaza and the hills of Bethlehem.

Another strategic goal we once had in Lebanon, to altogether reinvent it as a Christian-led, democratic peace partner, is also deep in history's dust bin.

Indeed, the Maronites' failure to deliver the leadership, courage, and loyalty which Israel had attributed to them, coupled with the earlier demise of Israeli allies in Iran, Ethiopia, and Kurdistan, put a lid on a 25-year-long search for alliances on the Middle East's non-Arab and non-Muslim peripheries.

THE bottom line is that with PLO rivals gone south and Maronite allies vanished north, Israel's current Lebanese affair isn't but a dim echo of long lost causes. Defending northern settlements is of course a worthwhile cause, only

surely, that still leaves open the question of what, actually, is Israel's long-term strategy in Lebanon, besides the basic yearning for a fully peaceful Middle East in some distant future.

The answer to that is simple: a commercial restoration. The more Lebanon resurrects that Phoenician spirit which once fueled the entire eastern Mediterranean basin's economy, the better it is for Israel, even if in itself it has little to do with it.

The Lebanese already are busy doing just this in the greater Beirut area. Evacuating another sliver of their land may ultimately allow their reconstruction effort to spread all the way to Metulla. Obviously, our stepping aside is not a sufficient condition for this to happen, but it is a necessary one.

Conversely, if an Israel-free south continues to hassle us, the IDF will have full license to hit strategic Lebanese targets, like Beirut's power supply, which was so simple and effective during Operation Grapes of Wrath.

Finally, a pullback would also teach us a humbling but inevitable lesson about our limited role in this region's affairs.

Paradoxically, Menachem Begin's bellicose intrusion into an Arab neighbor's politics and Shimon Peres's pacific New Middle East vision had a common denominator: the belief that we could reshape a region where it is culturally, ethnically, and geographically marginal. The fact is that, whether by military or diplomatic offensives, we can't. All we can do is monitor this ghastly Middle East closely so as to respond firmly when it confronts us, and generously when it accommodates us.

Now, exposing the IDF to south Lebanon's guerrillas, employing other Lebanese as menial workers, arresting, jailing, and interrogating yet others, and throughout it all decrying Beirut's servility to Damascus neither nurtures worthwhile allies nor effectively beats implacable enemies. So why be there?

Not quite so fast

JONATHAN ROSENBLUM

Jewish apostates of the Middle Ages who so often instigated disputations between Jews and Christians and supplied the Church with choice quotes from the Talmud ripped out of context.

Long after memory of the fraudulent story of the raped haredi woman has faded, the impression of the cruel Halacha will remain

THE lazy follow-up by other papers must certainly have encouraged Suissa's confidence that he would get away with it. That sloppiness extended to treatment of the relevant Halacha as well. The news item in this paper, for example, was replete with halachic errors, including the ridiculous suggestion that the Halacha imputes culpability to the rape victim. The high priest, for instance, is forbidden to marry a widow — and not because we suspect she murdered her first husband.

The Post article went on to quote various feminists to the effect that only the callousness of the rabbis involved prevented them from finding a solution to the problem. Now, it is clearly ridiculous to discuss how imaginary rabbis in a made-up case should have acted differently. But Dudi Zilbershlag's initiative itself shows how eager the rabbis always are to mitigate individual suffering.

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, the leading recent halachic authority, provides in his published responsa a solution for many such cases that does not vitiate the Halacha.

The damage done by the Yediot story is not removed by an apology buried on page 19. Readers of The Washington Post and Detroit News who read the denunciation of the barbarity of the Halacha by the president of Na'amat will never know that the case was fabricated.

A powerful story or visual image — like the faked PLO photo of a little girl with her arms blown off from the 1982 Operation Peace for Galilee — remains even after exposed as false. Long after memory of Suissa's fraud has faded, the impression of the cruel Halacha will remain.

We have repeatedly seen how lies told about religious Jews

Two weeks ago, the story of a haredi mother of nine raped by three Romanian workers gripped the country. Because her husband is a *kohen* — or so the story went — the couple was required to divorce.

On the basis of that tale, first reported in Yediot Aharonot and subsequently disseminated widely, a number of women's organizations staged a noisy demonstration in front of the Tel Aviv Chief Rabbinate.

Only one little problem: The story was fabricated out of whole cloth by veteran Yediot reporter Moshe Suissa, the self-styled rabbi of Meretz. When the fraud became known, Suissa was forced to resign.

So all's well that ends well. The guilty have been punished, and the press has successfully regulated itself. Well, not quite so fast. The press did not exactly cover itself in glory.

No Bernsteins and Woodwards uncovered the fraud. The mainstream press bought the story hook, line and sinker, though it was totally lacking in corroborating details.

Suissa's overactive imagination only came to light because Dudi Zilbershlag, a haredi public relations consultant, was so pained by the story that he talked with leading rabbinic figures in Jerusalem.

Believing that he had a halachic solution for the couple, he set out to contact them via Suissa. When Suissa, for obvious reasons, refused to help him, he contacted all the rabbinical courts in the Tel Aviv area. Only when he drew a complete blank did he realize that no such incident had occurred.

What could have led a journalist, safely ensconced at the country's largest paper, to concoct such a story? Surely Suissa knew that exposure could end his career. He obviously felt that the reward for breaking such a scoop would be very great and the chance of detection negligible.

On the reward side, he recognized that haredi-bashing is a favorite national sport, for which successful practitioners are rewarded with fame and fortune. As for the chance of getting caught, Suissa had good reason to believe that credulous colleagues, eager for juicy stories depicting haredim in a negative light, would not check too closely. And voila — the scoop that wasn't.

Suissa's scoop is not the first such forgery to have been revealed, and one can only wonder how many other such cases have gone undetected. The authors of such fables follow in a ignoble lineage from the

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Adar 17-19, 5758, March 15-17, 1998

Wolfram Rainer in memoriam
The Colloquium will take place on Sunday and Monday morning in the Maierdorf Faculty Club, Hebrew University campus, Mount Scopus, on Monday, from 16:00, in the Supreme Court; and on Tuesday (at 15:00) in the Ramat Gan Law College (Rehov Pinhas 87).

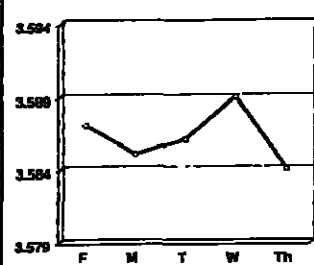
The Colloquium will involve the participation of scholars from Germany as well as from Israel
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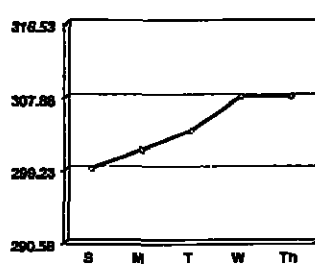
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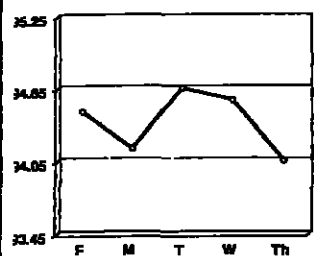


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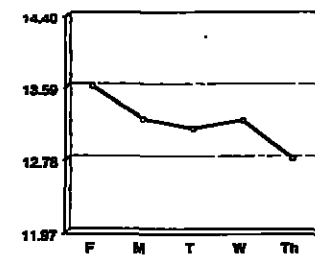
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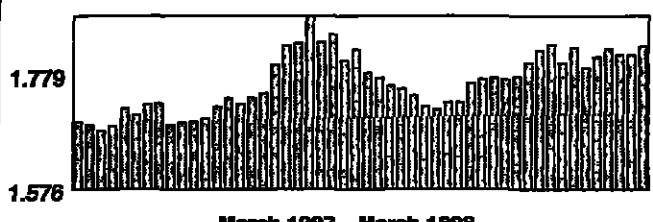


OIL

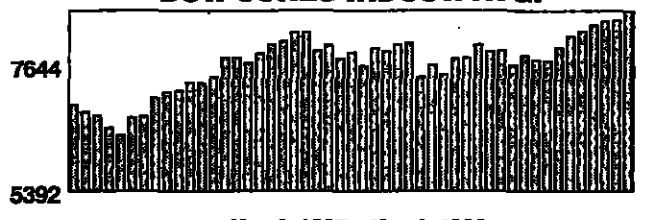
\$ per barrel of Brent crude



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BITS & BYTES

By NINA GILBERT

US military installs Finjan security system

The US defense establishment has installed a Finjan Software network security system to protect several of its highly sensitive systems from attacks generated from downloadables via the Java and ActiveX Internet applications.

The military is already using Check Point's Firewall-1 to protect its systems. The Netanya-based Finjan, established in 1996, is privately owned and enlisted \$10 million in venture capital last September.

VocalTec opens Japan subsidiary

VocalTec Communications Ltd. and Fujitsu Business Systems Ltd. announced the signing of a distribution agreement this week aimed at bringing the full range of VocalTec Internet Protocol (IP) telephony network solutions to mainstream, national and multinational corporate customers worldwide. The Herzliya-based VocalTec also announced the opening of a fully owned subsidiary in Tokyo.

Chartered Semiconductor opens office here

Chartered Semiconductor Manufacturing (CSM), the Singapore-based chip manufacturer, recently opened a business office in Savoyon. The aim of the office is to give Israeli clients assistance in the preparing chip designs through the manufacturing stage.

Hod Finkelstein, Israel country manager for CSM, said the company aims to tap the potential of Israeli high-tech companies. "Israel is seen to have great potential for demand for chips for communications and image processing, but right now has not reached the stage of mass production."

French telecom firm picks Emulek product

Matra Communication, the second-largest telecommunications company in France, has purchased Emulek Ltd.'s Rapid simulation software, used in the development of products. Emulek, established in 1991 and based in Jerusalem's Har Hotzvim high-tech park, recently postponed its initial public offering on Wall Street.

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Gaon steps down from Koor

Claridge's Kolber to take over as chief executive officer

By DAN GERSTENFELD

Koor Industries' board of directors yesterday accepted the resignation of company CEO Benny Gaon, which takes effect July 1. Gaon will be replaced by Jonathan Kolber, vice chairman of Koor and CEO of Claridge Israel.

According to a joint statement published by Gaon and Koor chairman Charles Bronfman, Gaon will continue to serve as special adviser to the company until the end of the year "in order to assist the new CEO in his first period in office." In addition, Gaon will provide Koor consultancy services in the next two years for \$125,000 a year.

Claridge, owned by Kolber and Bronfman, took control of Koor in July when it purchased 24% of the company from Shamrock Holdings for \$423 million. Since then, Claridge has increased its stake in Koor to 27.6% by buying shares on the open market.

Bronfman, who is also co-chairman of the Canadian distiller Seagram, came to Israel to participate in yesterday's board meeting, during which the management dis-

cussed the strategic plan for the company.

In a statement to the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange, Israel's largest

conglomerate said it intends to reach the following targets in the years 1998-2000:

- Raising profitability growth of

the company's core activities by an annual 15%-20%.

- Increasing the income from exports to 60% of total revenues.

• Strengthening Koor's presence in international markets. The company said that this will be done partly by acquiring companies.

• Abandoning activities which don't have high growth potential.

The company has already stated in the past that it intends to focus in the future on telecommunications, electronics and agro-chemicals.

Koor said that all the board directors denied rumors concerning a confrontation between Claridge and Gaon. It is widely believed, however, that Gaon and Kolber had some serious disagreements concerning the company's activities and Gaon's authorities.

Gaon plans to establish a new \$100 million fund to promote the peace process through business involvement. Bronfman said Koor would consider investing in the fund. Asked about his future plans, Gaon said "all options are open, including entering politics."

According to reports, both sides agreed that Gaon will receive some NIS 3m. Gaon has already exercised options worth NIS 40m. and can exercise options estimated at about NIS 14m. in June.

The inevitable end

BACKGROUND

By DAN GERSTENFELD

After a decade as CEO of Koor Industries, Israel's largest holding company, the 63-year-old Israeli who turned the beleaguered Histadrut conglomerate into a major success story is making way for a 37-year-old Canadian immigrant.

The departure of Benny Gaon, who is often acclaimed as Israel's top executive, was inevitable once Jonathan Kolber stepped into Koor's headquarters last July. The difference in mentality, character and management style between the outspoken Gaon and the reserved Kolber led to an inevitable clash.

Gaon, who was used to being the sole decision maker, found it hard to accept the new situation, whereby the largest shareholder also makes the major decisions.

Still, Gaon is bequeathing a large, focused and sophisticated conglomerate which bears little resemblance to the debt-ridden establishment he inherited.

Like Moses, who emancipated the Israelite slavery-welded mind-frame, Gaon changed Koor's character from that of a bloated, mismanaged and legendarily inefficient firm to the Israeli business sector's globally admired flagship. In this respect, he epitomized the dawn of Israel's privatization era. His departure, and replacement, coincide with the dawn of another new age, that of de-monopolization. Kolber's disinterest in Nesher, Koor's time-honored monopolistic profit center in the cement industry, was a major bone of contention between him and Gaon.

Unfortunately for him, much like Moses who watched as the Israelites entered the Promised Land, Gaon, who presided over the company's sweeping layoffs and return to profitability, will now have to watch from the sidelines as others take it one step further, from a local corporation to a diversified international player. That, apparently, requires a new style of leadership.

Neeman: No GDP growth with such high tax rates

 By DAVID HARRIS
and DAN GERSTENFELD

Economic growth will remain stunted unless there are immediate changes to the country's income tax system, Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman told *The Jerusalem Post* yesterday.

"There will be no growth with tax levels like these," said Neeman. "Forty percent of the gross domestic product is returned [to the state] as taxes. There can be no growth in a situation like this."

Since August, the Treasury has been working on changes aimed at reducing tax levels while widening tax collection, making the system more progressive.

"I hope that by the end of this month, as I promised, we will finish checking all the proposals," said Neeman. "As soon as we conclude this I will tell the public and I will be happy to hear comments from the people."

Of the 2.5 million registered workers, 48 percent do not even reach the tax threshold said Neeman, who called this fact "staggering."

Today a working man is exempt from paying tax on the first NIS 2,606 of his monthly salary and a woman, NIS 2,988. The threshold of a woman with two children is NIS 4,192. From that point people are taxed, beginning with a rate of



Yaakov Neeman (Isaac Harari)

10 percent.

During 1998, the Treasury expects to raise NIS 4.1 billion from 2.2 million hired workers and 300,000 self-employed.

Furthermore, Neeman revealed that the 47% of workers paying up to 45% marginal tax cough up 47% of all income tax paid, whereas the 5% of employees who pay 50% marginal tax contribute the remaining 53%.

"Today you reach 60% tax on a monthly salary of NIS 17,000, including national insurance and health tax. This is just absurd," said the minister. "How can we attract the software engineers who will advance the Israeli economy, when they'll have to pay 60% tax?"

While Neeman is in favor of

reforming the income tax system for individuals, he said the current 36% company tax is "very reasonable and similar to that of the US and England."

At the end of next week, Neeman said, he will be going to the US for meetings with potential investors, including possible purchasers of Bank Leumi.

At the same time, he will be holding talks with members of the administration and Congress to agree on specifics for the reduction of US civilian aid, in return for an increase in military aid. The minister refused to elaborate.

Concerning the privatization of El Al, Neeman said a discussion on whether the company will fly on Shabbat post-privatization is currently immaterial, as the only proposal on the table is reducing the government's holding to 51% and not selling the company entirely.

By law, El Al, as a government company, cannot fly on Shabbat. "As long as it is a government company that rule remains," said Neeman, who added that the aim is to sell the shares on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange in several stages.

Neeman denied that he or the government are delaying the sale of the shares because of the implications of the Shabbat issue.

"I'm not running away from this issue at all," he said.

'Ofakim unemployment reduced below 10%'

By DAVID HARRIS

Figures to be published on Sunday are likely to show unemployment in Ofakim dropped below 10 percent in February, according to Employment Service director-general Moshe Dimri.

In August last year joblessness in the Negev city peaked at 16.4%,

when the national average was running at some 8%.

"Much of this is due to the prime minister [Benjamin Netanyahu]'s visit, which led to the creation of real jobs," said Dimri. In late December, Netanyahu visited Ofakim and promised to create

300 jobs immediately.

"The same type of job-creation packages are being implemented at development towns throughout the country," said Dimri, who said significant inroads are also being made into unemployment in towns such as Sderot and Katzin.

"If growth reaches 2%, then 30,000 new jobs will be created this year but when you take into account immigration and the birthrate, there will be increased unemployment," said the Employment Service head. Dimri said that while the inter-ministerial committee for tackling unemployment in development towns is doing good work, far more must be done by the Treasury and Bank of Israel.

It's still looking grim in Ofakim, Page 15

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Nasdaq, Amex in merger talks

NEW YORK (Bloomberg) — The Nasdaq Stock Market and the American Stock Exchange, the second- and third-largest US stock markets, are in merger talks, two people familiar with the situation said.

Combining the Nasdaq — home to the nation's fastest-growing companies, including Microsoft and Intel — and the Amex would help both compete for new listings with the New York Stock Exchange.

It also would boost the Amex, which has relied mostly on options and derivatives, not stock trading, for growth in the past 10 years.

"It's about time," said Susan Woodward, a former chief economist at the Securities and Exchange Commission. "The Amex has been losing business for years. If Nasdaq can trade stocks and options in close proximity, that could be quite valuable."

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Courting Europe

Ican't be late for a king," said Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu as he cut short his persistent Spanish interviewers on the tarmac of Madrid Airport.

In a flash the prime minister was away in his flag-bedecked motorcade to see King Juan Carlos at the royal palace, at the start of a meticulously planned trip that took him to four Western European capitals in less than four days. Seldom if ever has an Israeli prime minister made such a concerted effort to bring so many of the European Union's key members into the Middle East peace-making picture as did Netanyahu last weekend, with strong assistance from Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai.

Netanyahu made lightning visits to Spain, Germany, Norway and the United Kingdom, while Mordechai covered France and the Netherlands.

Their purpose was not only to update their European hosts on the status of the Middle East peace process but also to convince them of Israel's interest in encouraging their role as co-facilitators and partners with the US.

The Europeans don't need much convincing.

"We provide much more economic aid to the Palestinians than do the Americans," said British Ambassador David Manning, contending that the \$1.8 billion transferred to the Palestinian Authority's economy by the European Union gives it a legitimate right to be actively involved in the diplomatic efforts.

"Israel needs a stable, tranquil neighbor to its east," Manning went on. The clear implication: By buttressing the PA's economy the EU is serving Israel's interests as well.

Speaking with the authority of the EU's presidency, which Britain assumed at the beginning of the year, Manning "welcomed Netanyahu's effort to engage with the Europeans."

Every one of the prime minister's stops was symbolic: Madrid, as the venue of the watershed 1991 Madrid Conference on Middle East peace (a forum whose possible, though unlikely, reconvening was suggested by Spain's

Seldom has an Israeli premier made such a concerted effort to bring key European Union members into the Middle East peacemaking picture, writes Jay Bushinsky

foreign minister); Bonn, where Israeli leaders consistently find more understanding and support for their policies than anywhere else in the EU; Oslo, where the accords with the Palestinians were conceived; and London, where Prime Minister Tony Blair holds the highly influential EU presidency.

A senior Israeli official referred to the intensity of EU interest in Israel and the peace process when he ticked off the names of European leaders due to arrive

here for visits. At the top of his list was Italian President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, who was supposed to start his tour on Sunday, but postponed it due to illness. British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook will land in Israel next week, as part of a swing through Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the PA. Blair is due to visit next month.

'Europe's history as colonialists sometimes imbues them with an idee fixe in trying to solve local problems'
— Foreign Ministry's Freddy Eytan

DESPITE THIS diplomatic activity, which includes the very real French interest in brokering a deal that would enable the IDF to pull out of southern Lebanon, the EU does not regard itself as an alternative or competitor to the US in leading the way to Middle East peace.

"We certainly do not see ourselves as replacing the Americans on the Israeli-Palestinian track," said Manning. "But as long as the process initiated in Oslo exists, we'll work with it."

"Our role need not be an antithesis to the US role. The Israeli government would prefer to do as much as possible bilaterally (through direct contact with the Palestinians). You don't need another player in implementing the Oslo process."

One of the reasons for the EU's willingness to take a back seat to the State Department's peacemakers is that it does not yet have a unified foreign policy. It is only four years since the EU began trying to present a common front on

foreign affairs. EU peace envoy Miguel Moratinos personifies that effort.

But the Foreign Ministry's Freddy Eytan, who is a veteran analyst of European affairs, noted the continuing lack of unanimity in the EU members' respective attitudes toward the Middle East and its component states. Eytan believes this factor hampers their ability to mediate or reconcile the contending parties.

"The Europeans speak in many voices," he said, noting that their history as colonialists has occasionally imbued them with an idee fixe in trying to solve local problems. "Their activity is often a direct result of specific events or an outcome of public opinion," he observed.

Eytan contended that the European Left holds to the view that the international community must not apply a "double standard" to the Middle East in

demanding that Iraq obey UN resolutions while not asking the same of Israel.

Eytan also said he believed the Americans had an advantage in that their history does not contain the same degree of antisemitism that has manifested itself in Europe's history over hundreds of years.

Netanyahu and Mordechai were able to maneuver deftly between the diverse attitudes toward Israel that exist within the EU — from Holland's traditional warmth and amity to Spain's even-handedness, through Norway's ambivalence, Germany's unwillingness and inability to endorse policies deemed critical or hostile, and Britain's reserve.

DURING his visit here, British Foreign Secretary Cook is expected to present the points he made in his latest speech on the Middle East, especially the need for Israel to go ahead with the second and third troop redeployments stipulated in the Oslo Accords.

He expects these to be completed by this summer, as stated in the side letter appended to the Hebron Agreement.

"Cook will not come out with percentages," Manning said, referring to how much of the West Bank should be evacuated by the IDF, "but he agrees with the Americans that Israel must honor its commitments."

At the same time, Cook will reflect the unanimous EU view that there must be a halt to Israeli settlement activity.

Although Cook did not see Netanyahu in London the EU's stand on settlements was made clear to him there.

"You can be against settlements without being anti-Israeli," Manning said. Cook is likely to offer British assistance in launching and operating the projected Palestinian airport at Dabaniya or constructing the seaport at Gaza, however.

Underlying the EU's concept of the parameters for compromise in the Palestinian-Israeli dispute is the need for Israel to be secure.

"The key to our approach is a total commitment to Israeli security," Manning said.



Something to smile about? British Premier Tony Blair, who holds the highly influential EU presidency, leads Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu into his official residence in London's Downing St. this week. (AP)



Prime Minister Netanyahu chatting with Spain's King Carlos in Madrid's royal palace. The Spanish favor an 'evenhanded' approach to Israel's problems. (AP)



Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, center, reviews the troops with his Dutch counterpart Joris J.C. Voorhoeve before their talks in the Hague on Monday. (AP)



Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat in Gaza with Jan Pronk, Netherlands Development and Cooperation Minister. The EU has transferred \$1.8 billion to the Palestinian Authority. (AP)

The long way home from Naharayim

School mornings haven't been the same for Adi Iluz for about a year now.

She used to wait for her friend Natali Alkalai, who always came by to pick her up. Then the two 14-year-old girls would make their way to Beit Shemesh, a teacher who was wounded in the attack. Himi, who took part in evacuating several of the girls' bodies and is still being treated for trauma and flashbacks, helped her pupils answer some hard questions just after the shootings.

"They had many questions about whether they had done enough. What I told them was that, many times, things aren't under our control; we can't direct them."

"In time of danger some people can do more, some less. I tried to make them feel less guilty."

"The girls also accused us of many things, asking why we had taken them there. They had a great deal of anger."

Oranit Borgauker, who was wounded, said she was "angry about the irresponsibility at that moment — that they didn't know more about the site, that they took us there at all. That if they hadn't taken us there this wouldn't have happened, and we wouldn't be in this situation. It didn't have to happen."

Some parents have complained of increasing behavior problems and depression among their daughters.

Oshrat Abutbul, whose best friend Keren Cohen was killed, remembers, "I started to jump at my family for every little thing they said." She recalls coming home and reflecting on the tragedy, "and thinking it was happening all over again."

"Sometimes I thought it was all a sham, that they'd done it just to make the trip more exciting. I could only think about what I had seen, the girls I'd seen murdered, how they lay on the ground bleeding. That's all I thought about."

Farber recalls the "total inability to study... the shock, the confusion, not understanding how, what, or when."

"We'd allow them a degree of freedom, one that normally wouldn't have been accepted, to express their feelings. A girl would say: 'I just can't sit in class anymore,' and we'd say fine, and let her go home. But if they didn't turn up for a day or two, we'd find out why," Farber says.

"Strangely, the girls functioned better in school than at home."

They had their friends, their self-help and whatever we could give as staff.

"The afternoon hours — when they didn't want to be, when they were left alone with their thoughts — were much harder."

IN A SCHOOL populated mostly by traditional or observant pupils there were also questions of faith, beliefs that were shaken by the attack.

One girl, whose best friend fell on top of her when she was killed — probably saving her life — insisted that the weekly Torah portion had hinted such a thing would happen. The remark angered other girls.

Ismach talked to the confused youngsters about the trials of Job, about "the whole question of evil and people not always getting what they deserve, that we can never understand God's ways."

"At first I was angry and asked, like everyone, why it had happened to me and not to others," Abutbul

"Girlfriends sometimes fight; they couldn't forgive themselves for not having made up with those who died."

THIS YEAR homeroom teacher Rosa Himi took over some of the pupils of Yaffa Shukrun, a teacher who was wounded in the attack. Himi, who took part in evacuating several of the girls' bodies and is still being treated for trauma and flashbacks, helped her pupils answer some hard questions just after the shootings.

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One year after a Jordanian soldier gunned down seven eighth-grade girls out on a school trip Aryeh Dean Cohen visited Beit Shemesh to hear how their classmates are coping with the loss.



Oshrat Abutbul (left) and Oranit Borgauker gaze at the photographs of friends and classmates who died. The girls who survived the attack have done a lot of growing up since. (Karen Ben-Zion)

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At the beginning of the new school year, she reminded the girls of what she had told them in the days following the attack: "The murderer didn't just want to murder seven girls; he would have killed us all if he'd been able. But he would have been even happier to wipe out the girls' spirit, like Amalek. If we let them do that, he will have succeeded."

"We mustn't let him triumph, but carry on and grow stronger in our faith."

The girls, their teachers and the guidance counselors all agreed they would concentrate academically as they began ninth grade, an important period in deciding the future course their studies would take.

But the girls had obviously changed, Himi says.

"Some of them had lost their joy of living. They grew up very fast. When I speak with them I don't believe I'm talking to 14- and 15-year-olds. They've grown up emotionally in a way I would have preferred to spare them. I feel badly that they've lost some of their innocence."

Himi dedicated herself to helping the girls regain some of what

they had lost, reaching out with "the power of faith."

"The bullets flew right over my head to the right and to the left. Next to me three girls were killed," she said. "If God let me live, there's a reason. I must have a job to do in this world," Himi says.

Teachers also changed. Some felt guilty about not bringing the girls home alive; several received counseling. But it was their attitude toward their pupils that changed the most.

Says Gross: "A few teachers said they had learned not to take things for granted. In their relationships with their students they're a lot more careful now. They keep thinking, 'Who knows what might happen next?' They wouldn't want their last encounter with a student to be a negative one."

AS THE anniversary of the tragedy approached, the entire school prepared for a period

everyone knew would open old wounds.

"Anyone who's been in a traffic accident will know what it's like to get back into a car. We had a very traumatic month," Farber says.

Ismach and the other counselors talked to the girls about how Judaism deals with loss — first the shiva, then the *shloshim*, then the yearly remembrance held at the site of the tragedy.

"It meshed with the various stages of loss we had discussed with them from a psychological standpoint earlier. Acceptance is only reached much later on, but it's what we have to strive for," Ismach explains. Some of the girls were afraid to go, others said their parents wouldn't let them.

On the way up, "it was like seeing everything you learn about in psychology training come unfold before you," Ismach recalls. "On the way there, they talked about their fears, their anger. They told stories about what had happened."

"When the bus turned onto the road [at Naharayim], there was complete silence, then terrible crying," Himi recalls.

"I told them to recall memories of their best friend. It was terrible, very difficult. But we had a sweet revenge: We went there to plant trees, and in the end it made us feel that the person who had tried to wipe us out hadn't succeeded."

"They ran up the hill with two or three trees each, as if to say: We are here, no one will erase our memory."

Ismach adds: "When we were on our way home they asked if it was okay to sing, and we said certainly. And they sang in a way that made you feel they had closed a circle, that they were happy they had gone."

EIGHT girls are still receiving treatment. Some are only asking for it now "because they understand that it's okay to ask," Farber explains.

He praises the girls. "They've performed fantastically... However much we did, we needed them on the other side, responding."

"We know that some of these girls are going to have problems for a long time to come," Farber continues. "There's no magic solution, no pill to take it all away."

But it's the girls who deserve the credit. I say their grades two weeks ago, and nobody could have realized what they had been through."

As far as the school is concerned, Farber says, "the messages we've been sending to the children — to everyone — is that if there's anything positive to take from all this, it's to be a little bit better to each other."

Oshrat Abutbul remembers her best friend Keren Cohen each day in her own way.

"When things were hard for me," she says, "I sat and started to write letters to her. I told her what my life is like now, and what has changed. When I feel I really need her, I write to her. I know she's with me all the time."

There may still be "many bumps in the road" left for the girls and staff of the Furst School, as principal Motti Farber says, but they have been helped a lot by some special forms of treatment offered by the Kiryat Shmuna-based Community Stress Prevention Center.

Established by Mooli Lahad 18 years ago to help people living under the constant threat of Katyusha rockets and attacks, the center has since branched out, helping others learn to cope — like after the She'ar Yashuv helicopter disaster last year.

"We help the helpers," Alan Cohen of the center explained this week.

When educators in the Beit Shemesh region attended one of the center's seminars in early March of last year, they didn't quite understand what use it would be for them, since their town isn't on a border or in the territories.

Ten days later, the lessons they learned proved all too useful.

Immediately after the Naharayim shootings of March 13, 1997, the center's staff helped Furst personnel conduct what is known as a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing, "in which we gave people involved in different aspects of the problem a chance to put a general picture together," Cohen said.

"Some of the teachers were at Naharayim, some weren't. Everyone comes with a piece of a jigsaw puzzle, feels a part of the overall picture of disaster," he said.

The idea was to work toward producing a whole picture so that support could be offered in a concrete, logical way. Reactions also had to be "normalized," to help people who are affected to understand what they are feeling, Cohen said.

"When people experience this kind of thing for the first time they think they're going crazy. They ask: 'Why am I shaking,

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It's still looking grim in Ofakim

When the premier promised jobs during a December visit to the town he sparked hope of better days ahead. But nothing has really changed, embittered residents told Dan Izenberg

Employment service director-general Moshe Dimri has given orders to his officials not to discuss the unemployment situation in Ofakim. He doesn't want anyone to spoil the show before next week, when the February unemployment statistics are officially published.

Unemployment in Ofakim has dropped from 14.6 percent in November to 13.6 percent in December, down to 10.8 percent in January, the month after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's famous December 22 visit.

A few days earlier, the Negev development town of 23,000 had become the symbol of the increasingly severe unemployment problem that is racking the country, when its residents shut down the city and burned tires in the streets. At the time, Ofakim had the highest official unemployment rate in Israel.

Chances are good that Dimri wants to inform the nation next week that unemployment has dropped below 10 percent, and that Ofakim, therefore, is no longer officially classified as an unemployment "core." If that happens, it will be news to the residents of the town, most of whom see no change in the city since Netanyahu's visit, when the prime minister promised 300 immediate job solutions and more effective help over the long run.

"It was all a bluff," said David Guetta, 42, a carpenter who has been out of work for three-and-a-half years. "Most of the unemployed here have basic skills - construction, electricity, plastering and agriculture. There is no work for such people. When Netanyahu came, I thought that at long last he would set things right. Much to my sorrow, he didn't do anything."

During a dramatic meeting in Ofakim's community center that day, Netanyahu read out a list of factories, most of them out of town, that would hire the local unemployed. The list included 50 employees for Israel Aircraft Industries in Lod, 50 for the Electric Corporation plants in Ashkelon and Ramat Hovav, 30 for clothing factories, 30 for the Bezeq facility in Beersheba, and 150 for the ECI-Telecom high-tech factory in Ofakim.

Two-and-a-half months later, these promises have not yet been kept in full.

The IAI selected 25 candidates for a training course which has not yet begun because of a dispute between the company and the government over who should foot the bill. IAI spokeswoman Sylvia Beit-Halachmi said that after the dispute is resolved, the IAI will dispatch representatives to Ofakim to see which candidates are still interested in the course.

In other developments: 12 people have found work with a local factory which had been contracted to work for Elta, an IAI subsidiary.

The Electric Corporation has hired 28 people and will start separate training courses later this month in welding and metalwork for an additional 38 candidates. Those who pass the course will be guaranteed work, said EC spokesman Dedi Golan.

Twenty-six people have been hired by ECI-Telecom, 42 are undergoing salaried job-training courses and an additional 16 are due to begin work in April - all of them as a result of Netanyahu's intervention, according to the company's spokeswoman, Yaffa Elad. Another 46 workers have been hired since January as part of its regular development program.

Thirty women have found jobs as seamstresses in Beersheba.

Thirty residents are working as Bezeq telephone operators in Beersheba.

Thirty-one-year-old Ya'acov Atlas is one of the lucky ones. Three weeks ago, the Electric Corporation informed him he had been accepted on a training course for high-pressure welding. "I started the application process on December 31," he said. "They checked my aptitude, my health and whether or not I had a criminal record. Three weeks ago, they told me I was accepted."

Atlas is not typical of the hard core of unemployed in Ofakim. He is young and determined, and has rarely been out of work since leaving the army. His last job ended six weeks ago.

Nissim Edri, 28, was not so lucky. A truck driver and former criminal, he has been jobless for most of the past four years. He applied for the IAI and EC jobs and was turned down by both. "They didn't want simple people without a profession," he explained. "They also didn't want anyone with a criminal record. I waited a long time to be interviewed and as soon as I sat down, they told me they wanted people with 12 years of schooling and no criminal record."

Edri says he's eager to work and intends to travel to Eilat in two weeks. "I worked there for eight months but came back last year. Ofakim is my home, the place I was born, where my brothers live. I thought things would get better after Netanyahu's visit, that they would open a factory or two. Now, it looks like it was all talk. The only ones who got something out of the strike were the municipal workers. They were the ones who led it, and as soon as they got their salaries, they stopped."

According to Employment Service statistics, about 190 people found jobs in December and January. We will only know next week how many jobless joined the work force in February. But it's obvious that only a fraction of those who have found work since Netanyahu's visit did so in the companies he mentioned that day.

The rest, according to Ofakim Labor Council head Yossi Marciano, have either enrolled in job-training courses, during which they are paid by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and temporarily removed from the unemployment rolls, or have been assigned manual relief work for the Jewish National Fund or the Antiquities Authority.

About 150 residents have enrolled in the training courses which will end in a few months without a guarantee of work, according to Marciano.

Another 60 have found relief work, many of them traveling three hours each day from Ofakim

to Ein Hemed near Jerusalem, and back, "to scrape rocks for minimum wages of NIS 2,400."

He's not upset by these solutions. It is better to work or study and receive pay than accept unemployment insurance or welfare, he said. Besides, the Labor government did the same thing. The problem is that the situation in Ofakim has actually deteriorated since Netanyahu's visit, said Labor Council head Marciano.

"Before he came, an average of 20 people refused to take jobs suggested by the Employment Service. Since then, the number has risen to 80," as the government has stepped up the pressure on the jobless to accept any work. An unemployed person who refuses a job proposed by the Employment Service loses his right to unemployment or welfare payments for three months. Often, they are ordered to accept difficult jobs they can't cope with," said Marciano.

"I expect the prime minister to establish factories in order to solve the unemployment problem permanently, not through artificial means," he added.

It appears that there are some new industries actually in the offing for Ofakim, but only one of them as the result of the efforts of Netanyahu or his director-general, Moshe Leon.

About 15 companies have received official government authorization over the past few years to open factories in Ofakim, and a few of them will likely do so soon, according to Yisrael Herman, who is in charge of economic development for the city. These include Metra, a bus assembly company, Keter Plastics, two lumber factories, and a jewelry factory - altogether accounting for more than 300 jobs.

Two other possibilities among the approved projects are an aluminum factory and an infrastructure factory offering 180 jobs. In addition, two high-tech companies which have not yet received government authorization want to set up shop in Ofakim. The prime minister's office has been actively encouraging one of them, according to Herman.

The key question in assessing the significance of Netanyahu's December visit is not whether a few hundred jobs - many of them fictitious - have been created to stem the tide, but whether the directors-general committee headed by Leon is doing anything to solve the problem in the long run.

The answer is no, according to Ofakim local patriots.

One senior city official, who votes Likud, said, "The change of governments in 1995 was bad for Ofakim." The official, who asked not to be identified, said that since Netanyahu came to power, the directors-general committee, established by former prime minister Shimon Peres after the closure of the Ouman clothing factory, has not functioned seriously. One reason for this was political, he said. Ofakim Mayor Micha Herman belongs to the Labor Party. Another reason is personal, said the source. The Prime Minister's Office has never forgiven Herman for his appearance on the Channel



Time on their hands: Only a fraction of those who have found work since Netanyahu's visit did so in the companies he cited.

(Photographs by Sami Uzieli)



There are wonderful people in Ofakim, says Histadrut Trade Union Department head Jimmy Abecasis (left); Yossi Marciano, who heads the town council, claims the situation has actually worsened since Netanyahu came calling.



I talk show *Popolitica* the night of Netanyahu's visit to his city. He charged that most of the jobs the prime minister had read out that day did not exist.

Furthermore, the source said, local Likud politicians don't want the government to bail out the city; if things remain bad, the residents will vote Herman out of power next fall.

Shmuel Laor, a Likud supporter and Herzliya businessman who owns shops in Ofakim, said, "The directors-general committee doesn't work seriously. They meet once in two weeks or once a month." Laor said some of the recommendations were laughable

like establishing a sauerkraut factory.

He also charged that Herman is treated unfairly because he belongs to the Labor Party.

Yair Ma'ayan, head of the department of coordination and supervision in the Prime Minister's Office, denied the accusations. He acknowledged that until last December, the directors-general committee met only twice to discuss Ofakim, but that Herman had been in routine contact with all the relevant ministries. "There was no special need to convene the directors-general committee," said Ma'ayan.

Since December, the committee

has discussed Ofakim four times. Herman attended the first three meetings but failed to show up six weeks ago to discuss a proposal to solve the sewage problem in Ofakim, which has been a serious obstacle to the development of the city's industrial zone. Nor has he showed up for any committee meeting since, said Ma'ayan, who also denied the accusations that the committee discriminates against Herman because he belongs to the Labor Party.

"Nonsense," he said. "Ask the Labor mayor of Sderot whether we discriminate against him. We do not inject politics into our considerations. Herman has personal

problems and must be looking for someone to blame them on."

Histadrut trade-union department head Jimmy Abecasis is not impressed by the plans for Ofakim's salvation. Three months after helping to organize the general strike which brought Netanyahu running, Abecasis has come to the conclusion that the protest action was counterproductive. "The ultimate consequence of the strike was that people throughout the country got the impression that the residents of Ofakim are helpless unfortunates," he said. "That isn't true. There are wonderful people here. All they need is some high-tech."

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The late-night bus service will initially operate for a three-month trial period; its extension will depend on the results of the trial.

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Why did it have to be her?

Cosmetics mogul Pnina Rosenbloom's Knesset campaign makes many feminists uncomfortable. But she's determined to prove that there's no greater feminist than she. Allison Kaplan Sommer reports

On the day Pnina Rosenbloom was overwhelmingly voted the most successful woman in Israel by the readers of *La'isha* magazine, the blonde cosmetics-mogul-turned-Knesset-candidate was interviewed about her victory on Israel Radio's *It's All Talk* program.

Her interview followed a hard news item on the situation in Lebanon, and the show's host, Shelley Yehimovitch, opened by asking Rosenbloom whether Israel should consider a unilateral withdrawal.

Without missing a beat, Rosenbloom recalls, she outlined her Lebanon stand (centrist, advocating withdrawal only with iron-clad guarantees). She then went on to field questions from Yehimovitch about other national issues of the day, including the appointment of the new Mossad chief.

"She thought she was going to take me by surprise by asking me about security issues and hear me stutter and embarrass myself," Rosenbloom recalls, chuckling with satisfaction. "But - listen to me - people were saying that they thought I should be defense minister."

Rosenbloom, 42, clearly thrives on defying expectations.

Rosenbloom's run for the Knesset has put Israeli feminists in a quandary. While it is true that feminists in general, and the Israel Women's Network (IWN) in particular, have been pushing to get women to run for public office, Rosenbloom wasn't exactly the kind of woman they had in mind.

In an age when the women's movement has been struggling to convince society to pay attention to what women can accomplish, instead of to how they look, Rosenbloom is perceived as a successful businesswoman whose opinions are a large extent because of how she looks.

In recent weeks, the debate in feminist circles as to whether they should support Rosenbloom and her new party, Tenufa ("Momentum"), has been making headlines.

"Women did not make Pnina Rosenbloom. Men did," contends Dr. Dafna Izraeli, chair of the department of sociology at Bar-Ilan University, who says she will not support her.

"Men defined her as a sex object, embodying a kind of femininity that raises her testosterone level. They desire her. Then, in kind of a halo effect, women who may want to be desired by men admire her and buy her creams and makeup."

"Yes, women do view her as successful, but it is disturbing that

women are taught to believe that being beautiful is so much a part of what being a successful woman is."

Still, Rosenbloom appears to be translating this admiration into goals that feminists normally respect, including independent economic power - building her own company instead of climbing the established corporate ladder or winning favors from a wealthy husband or father. Now she is seeking political power, bypassing the male-dominated existing parties and creating a new party.

But this alone is not enough to win over veteran feminists like Izraeli.

"Don't get me wrong: I appreciate women who give out the message that having money and being powerful are compatible with femininity," she says.

"But do I think Pnina Rosenbloom can represent me in the Knesset? No. I don't think she understands women's issues and I don't think there's something in her biography to indicate that she will advance women's issues."

"When I vote for Naomi Chazan or Anat Maor or Yael Dayan, I am confident they are committed to the issues of women," says Izraeli. "I can't say the same about Pnina Rosenbloom."

ROSENBLOOM ENTERS a room in her gleaming white-and-aqua mansion in Ramat Gan, wearing a skin-tight leather mini-dress and heavy make-up, and sweetly asks for this reporter's help in snapping her bra straps into her dress and hooking her necklace.

The four-story home, which looks as luxurious as a five-star hotel and as pristine as a museum - complete with chrome elevator, jacuzzi, and swimming pool - is the fruit of the labor of her well-manicured hands.

Nine years ago, the well-endowed model and actress with a ditzy-blond image found herself a niche in the lower end of the cosmetics and shampoo market, and has gradually built a business around products bearing her name.

As her business thrived, public admiration increased. In poll after poll, the Israeli public has expressed their appreciation of a girl who was raised in extreme poverty by an Iraqi mother who was abandoned by her Ashkenazi husband, and has turned her life into a Cinderella fairy tale - with a twist.

The twist is that she did not wait for a prince or millionaire on a white horse to give her a life of luxury and privilege. She earned her millions herself, married a young, good-looking man whom she brought into her company and adopted two picture-perfect children.

Under the Marilyn Monroe-like exterior lies a woman who likes to give orders, not take them.

"I like to be independent," she says. "I've never liked being dependent. I would hate to have to turn to my husband and ask him for money or anything else."

"I like to stay active and productive and achieve things in life. I can't imagine a life that consists of fixing myself up to look pretty and sitting in coffee shops with my friends. I need to be doing something active and stimulating."

"Believe me, though, some days I envy those women and imagine for a moment that I would much rather be lounging around the pool than be responsible for a business that employs 80 people and dealing with the accompanying headaches. But that kind of life is just not me."

Last spring, during a talk-show appearance, she first tossed out the idea of running for the Knesset. The response from the public was so enthusiastic she decided to make the move and has created Tenufa, which describes its mission as "fighting for social and economic justice."

"I didn't just wake up one morning and say I wanted to do this," Rosenbloom says. "Ever since I was a teenager, I always thought I wanted to be in public life someday."

"I don't believe that life is only about working and making money. I have a successful business, and I want to parlay that into doing something for the public."

"I'm just not interested in spending my life buying another business and another and another and making more and more money - that doesn't interest me. Helping others succeed and making this country better - that interests me."

NOT SURPRISINGLY, Rosenbloom believes that feminine charms are an asset, and no woman should be ashamed to use them, in business or in politics.

"I'm glad that I'm not a man and don't look like a man. I think a woman should be beautiful and intelligent, and if she is, thank God that she has this."

"I don't think that women who look good are less capable - I don't think there is anyone who is more of a feminist than me. Do you have any idea of how tough, how strong a woman has to be to make it in the Israeli business world?"

"I think women appreciate what I've done, they know how hard it must be to be an independent businesswoman, which is so much more pressure than to be a salaried manager. I think they like me because they know that I started with nothing, and that I am the same person that I was when I did not have money."



Rosenbloom believes that feminine charms are an asset, and no woman should be ashamed to use them, in business or in politics. (Reuters)

But doesn't the cosmetics industry encourage women to spend time cultivating their looks, sabotaging their efforts to achieve success, money and power?

"Bullshit," she says, dismissively. "It all depends on what you want in life and how you go about getting it. I combine my looks with my business with my family - and feel I have achieved enormous success."

IT IS precisely Rosenbloom's message that "I did it, so any woman can do it" that irks some feminists, like IWN chairwoman Rivka Meller-Olshtitzky, who has clear reservations about Rosenbloom's candidacy.

True, Rosenbloom, according to her platform, supports equal wages, harsher sentences for domestic violence, affordable and accessible child care, extra assistance for single-parent families, a tax deduction for child-care

expenses and government help for families adopting children abroad and families who need surrogacy to build families.

But what is missing from Rosenbloom's list, Olshtitzky says, is a ringing endorsement of affirmative action for women.

"I have a feeling of discomfort when she says every woman who wants to achieve something can, just as she did," Olshtitzky says. "The reality is not that every woman who wants to can. There is a glass ceiling in many professions, and we live in a society that puts many obstacles in the way of women's success."

She would also like Rosenbloom to be more forthright on issues like women in the army and women's problems vis-à-vis the religious establishment.

And if Rosenbloom did, indeed, decide to embrace the entire checklist of issues the IWN feels are important, what then? Could

Olshtitzky wholeheartedly support a politician who uses her blonde-bombshell image to sell the feminist agenda?

The answer is yes, but there is reluctance in her voice.

"Please understand, it is not so much Pnina Rosenbloom personally that bothers me, but the media age we live in. Let's face it, men use good looks to political advantage as well. Clinton is handsome and telegenic, so is Tony Blair, and whatever you can say about Netanyahu, he knows how to come across on television."

"As a feminist, I would like ideology and values to take center stage, not looks - for men or for women. But these days, ideals have to be marketed. We live in a culture of packaging, a shallow, consumer materialistic culture."

WOMEN POLITICIANS tend to be more supportive.

Labor MK Yael Dayan has voiced her support and interviewed Rosenbloom for a newspaper last year. Other women leaders are watching Rosenbloom take on politics with interest tinged with envy regarding her financial resources.

"I think that every woman who has the economic power and the organizational ability to build her own national party and decides to go for it has made an exceptional decision," says Rina Bar-Tal, deputy mayor of Ra'anana.

"I am speaking not as an ideologue but from the trenches of political experience. Political parties are organizations that are exceptionally difficult for women to get into. They are built in a hierarchical way that makes it seem that any woman who wants to get involved and have a place within them takes the place of a man."

"If someone can bypass this obstacle and create a party with messages and ideas that will speak to the public, and she has the money, more power to her."

Unlike Olshtitzky, Bar-Tal says she has no doubt about

Rosenbloom's commitment to affirmative action.

"When I heard Pnina Rosenbloom declare for the first time that her party's list would be 50 percent men and 50% women, that was good enough for me."

But whether Rosenbloom appeals to the feminist establishment ultimately matters less than whether her appeal is wide enough to actually vault her into the Knesset.

Izraeli is skeptical; she isn't totally convinced that Rosenbloom's Knesset run is not simply a publicity stunt to draw more attention to her business and products.

"If I had to place my bet, I'd say that she doesn't have the constituency to make it to the Knesset," she says. "I think that she will primarily get votes from men, who, instead of putting in a white slip of paper, will show their disaffection with politics by voting for Rosenbloom."

"Yes, she has a constituency that admires her ability to succeed in business, but there are plenty of other people who are successful in business who don't get into Knesset."

Whether or not others take her seriously, Rosenbloom is dead serious, and optimistic about her chances for success. Not only does she hope to get into the Knesset, but she would like to get enough mandates for a shot at a cabinet portfolio.

Prime Minister Pnina Rosenbloom, anyone? She certainly doesn't rule it out.

"I take things step by step. First I need to run, gain the trust of the people, show them that I know what to do with power, use it to prove myself, then we'll see," she says.

"Listen, I am running for the Knesset because it is what people told me I should do. If they start telling me in the same way that I should run for prime minister, who knows? I am the type who goes for all the marbles. I hold nothing back."

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Flirting with disaster

This week the Knesset passed what may be the world's most progressive law against sexual harassment. But how will it be enforced, and can it be used to blackmail? Larry Derfner investigates

The US was always thought to have the world's most far-reaching laws against sexual harassment. On Tuesday Israel took America's place, say initiators of the bill that passed this week in the Knesset, 18-1, with Moledet MK Rehavam Ze'evi supplying the only "no" vote.

The Hebrew University Law School's Dr. Orit Kamir, who co-authored the draft legislation, discussed it recently with the "mother" of sexual-harassment law, University of Michigan law professor Catherine MacKinnon. "MacKinnon said she didn't believe the US Congress would pass such a law, and that it would be a great advance if some other country did," Kamir said.

US law only deals with sexual harassment in the workplace, while the Israeli law, although it definitely focuses on the workplace, "also forbids sexual harassment in schools, in the army, on the street — anywhere," said Kamir. It also forbids "gay-bashing," an area which American law hasn't yet dealt with, she noted.

The idea that Israel is going to be even tougher than America on sexual harassment no doubt scares a lot of people here, mainly men. The common notion is that sexual harassment laws have had a chilling effect on American romance — that American men are afraid to so much as compliment a co-worker on her dress for fear of getting sacked or prosecuted. Another popular belief is that male American employers are terrified to fire bad female workers, and will even promote them to avoid being sued for sexual harassment.

"This is raging paranoia," insisted Kamir. American laws make it extremely difficult to prove sexual harassment, she said. Besides, pressing harassment charges means discussing sexual matters in detail, often with an intimidat-

ing boss or defense attorney. It's no fun, and women are in no hurry to do it, Kamir pointed out.

This exaggerated picture of what goes on in the American workplace at first scared off some MKs. "I agreed to support the bill only after I became convinced that it wouldn't put an end to romance," said Likud MK Ruby Rivlin.

There are women who enjoy it when men tell them they're pretty, that they have lovely eyes — it makes their day. This will still be perfectly legitimate, said Daniela Bamberger-Einosh, who lobbied for the bill on behalf of the Israel Women's Network.

Under the new law, which takes effect in six months, flirting will be legal, but sexual harassment won't — and the line between the two will be drawn according to the eyes of the beholder.

Men will have to learn that the difference between flirting and sexual harassment depends on the response from the woman, said Kamir. "If a man flirts with a woman, she has the responsibility to give the message as clearly as possible that she's not interested," Kamir added.

The initial flirt will be a free one; no sexual harassment involved. But if the woman tells the man clearly that she doesn't want his advances, that they make her uncomfortable, yet he persists, then it becomes sexual harassment.

And if the case goes to court, the maximum penalty for sexual harassment would be two, three or four years in prison. The sentence would depend on the severity of the crime — how repeated it was, how aggravated, and how harmful it was to the woman. It's very

unlikely that a man who's just a pain in the neck to women around the office would have to go to jail for it, noted Bamberger-Einosh.

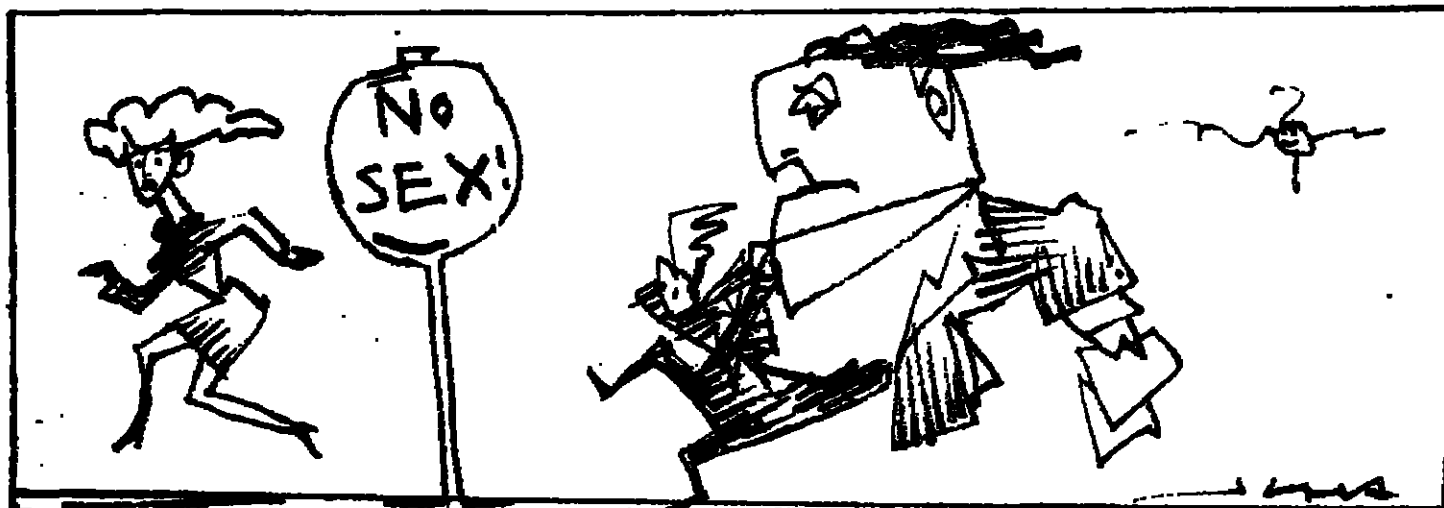
Yet the first line of defense against sexual harassment will fall not on the courts but on employers. If a boss is told by a worker that someone in the office is harassing her, the boss will have to investigate the complaint, and, if it appears credible, take steps to ensure that the harassment stops. This means warning the offender, or separating him from the woman of his fancy, or, if that doesn't solve the problem, even firing him. Companies with 25 or more workers will have to post the rules against sexual harassment in the workplace.

In court, victims will be able to claim up to NIS 50,000 in damages against the harasser without having to prove that they suffered. They won't have to bring in receipts from the psychiatrist's office, or a ledger showing the number of tears they shed. It will be enough to prove that harassment took place in order to show that the woman suffered damage. The law defines sexual harassment as "inherently damaging," said Bamberger-Einosh.

However, if a woman seeks more than NIS 50,000, she will have to "document" her suffering. If it is proven that the employer disregarded complaints about harassment, he would also be liable to pay up to NIS 50,000 in damages — although he wouldn't be in danger of going to jail.

One big question mark about the law is enforcement. It is widely believed that police are negligent in responding to complaints of violence against women, so how can anybody expect that they will respond to complaints of aggravated flirting?

Rachel Ben-Zimman, legal adviser to the Israel Women's Network



What the law says

The new law defines sexual harassment as: 1. Using authority to get sexual favors — for instance, by threatening to fire a worker or refuse to promote her if she doesn't comply; 2. Making repeated sexual

advances even after being told that they're unwanted; 3. Treating someone as a sexual object by commenting lasciviously on his or her body; 4. Humiliating someone because of his or her sexual orientation ("gay-bashing"). —L.D.

principle that women have the right not to be harassed. It will increase public consciousness of this. But he also said the difference between flirting and sexual harassment "is still unclear, although I don't know if it's possible to make absolutely clear distinctions when we're talking about human behavior."

Gattegno noted that what's acceptable behavior in some circles is unacceptable in others. "The vendors in the Carmel Market, for instance, may not be able to express themselves within the boundaries of the law as easily as, say, employees on the 17th floor of some office building," he said.

And the woman's disapproval may not necessarily make things clearer, he continued. "It could depend on how she says 'no,' it could depend on how the man interprets her 'no,' and these are not uniform codes for all people," he said.

Asked if he thought the law would put Israeli men in sexual

straitjackets, Gattegno said he didn't think so. "This might have happened to a certain extent in America because behavior there is more formal, people are more distant from each other. But Israeli behavior is so direct, so informal, that the flirting and joking — the good kind — won't change radically. Maybe men will be a little more careful, though," he said.

Until now, the only Israeli statute against sexual harassment was a 1988 addition to the Equal Employment Opportunities Law, which prohibited bosses from punishing workers who complained of harassment.

MKS WHO had early trepidations about the bill were persuaded to support it when they saw recent academic studies showing the extent of sexual harassment in Israel, Ben-Zimman noted. Surveys found that as many as half of Israeli women say they have been harassed, and three-quarters of them were afraid to complain or convinced it would do no good.

she said. In the Knesset debate prior to the vote, Ze'evi, the lone dissenter, said that while he certainly opposed sexual harassment, he believed the law would be "a tool for blackmail against employers, and would foul up relations completely between men and women in the workplace." He said there were numerous instances of women inventing stories of sexual harassment to take revenge against employers or ex-husbands.

Further, he said, "There are people who cannot control their eyelids, who wink uncontrollably. Will this be considered flirting, and if the women turns away, and he continues winking uncontrollably, will this be considered harassment?" Asked if Ze'evi said this seriously or sarcastically, his aide, Dalia Yitzhaki, said he was serious.

MK Rivlin agreed that there was a possibility that workers would use the law for blackmail, and warned that if this became a problem, the Knesset would pass a law making false complaints of sexual harassment punishable by five years in prison.

But, he insisted, Israeli romance was in no danger. "When I was young we used to tell women, 'Your eyes are like two cups of Turkish coffee,' and I'm sure this will still go on," Rivlin said. Unless, of course, the woman with the coffee-cup eyes tells the guy to stop.

At that point, it will be a whole different affair.

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The West's newest nightmare

Zilfi Halili awoke to predawn gunfire, then heard the heavy thump-thumping of police helicopters close over her village. It was the sound of a new battlefield erupting in the Balkans, just when the region seemed to be calming down.

"I saw them circling," she said. "They opened the doors of the helicopters and started shooting." Halili, 53, reacted as hundreds of thousands of others have across the Balkans in seven years of brutal ethnic warfare. She gathered her two daughters and 24 other women and children from her extended family and set off Thursday on a desperate trek through the forest.

"We just left the house. We didn't take anything with us," said the thin peasant woman, her eyes brimming with tears. "The men stayed to protect our homes."

"God help you!" was the last she heard from her husband, or anyone else left behind in the besieged village of Galica. Halili is an ethnic Albanian in a desolate mountainous area called Kosovo. The helicopters were part of the Serbian government's first major offensive against a budding Albanian separatist insurgency there. The 9-day-long battle represents the West's newest nightmare — a brush fire that could engulf the southern Balkans with the ferocity of another Bosnia. Forty-five Albanians and six Serbian police were killed in the fighting, by official Serbian count.

Kosovo's Albanians say the toll was probably higher from a Serbian

A brushfire conflict could engulf the southern Balkans in the raging flames of another Bosnia, writes Richard Boudreaux



An Albanian walks past the bodies of compatriots killed in clashes with Serbian police in Kosovo last week. (AP/Danko Vojinovic)

blitz that used armored vehicles and heavy artillery to demolish villages of tidy whitewashed houses with tiled roofs, leaving about 5,000 people homeless.

Ethnic Albanians make up 90 percent of the population of Kosovo — a province of Serbia, which is the dominant part of the rump Yugoslavia.

President Slobodan Milosevic, the Serbian overlord of Yugoslavia, stripped Kosovo of its autonomous status in 1989 and kept its 2 million people in submission — until

recently — with 19,500 heavily equipped police and soldiers. Now he has a fight on his hands.

The emergence of masked guerrillas calling themselves the Kosovo Liberation Army has quickly radicalized the area, undermining the local Albanian leadership's nonviolent path toward a de facto parallel state with its own taxes, schools, hospitals and other institutions.

Milosevic's forces struck hard after four patrolmen were slain in a February 27 guerrilla ambush. The police killed 25 people in a sweep that weekend through Drenica, an unruly vicinity comprising 33 towns and villages where the guerrillas are said to operate.

When 30,000 Albanians gathered in protest, police in riot gear dispersed them with clubs, water cannons and tear gas.

The guerrillas appealed Wednesday for military-age Albanians to join their ranks and avenge the killings. Unidentified gunmen sprayed a police station with gunfire that night, wounding two officers and setting off an even bigger Serbian assault on Drenica — the same assault that drove Halili and her large family into the woods.

That offensive wound up Sunday with Serbian forces in control of two near-deserted villages, Donji Prekaz and Lausa, their apparent targets.

Journalists escorted through the vicinity by bus said that about half of the 50 homes in Donji Prekaz had been heavily damaged or destroyed.

Police said they also found four underground bunkers — one storing machine guns and grenades and two others containing beds, operating tables and medical supplies.

"The operation to liquidate the heart of Kosovo terrorism has ended," Veljko Daljevic, the Serbian deputy chief of Kosovo province, said Sunday. But few in Kosovo believed the guerrillas were defeated, and police manning sandbagged junctions kept the area sealed off.

INTERNATIONAL observers say they are disturbed by parallels here with the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which ended in November 1995, and by the delayed fallout of a civil war that racked neighboring Albania in the first half of 1997.

"This is ultimately a very, very scary scenario," said Kris Janowski, a spokesman in Sarajevo, the Bosnian capital, for the Geneva-based UN refugee agency. "We are alarmed because we have seen it all before."

Ibrahim Rugova, the moderate elected leader of the Kosovo Albanians' shadow government, said the police assault was part of an "ethnic cleansing" campaign to rid Kosovo of non-Serbs.

Western leaders have been pushing Milosevic to negotiate Rugova's demands for autonomy — to no avail. The Yugoslav president made his refusal doubly clear by unleashing the police in Kosovo the same day he was receiving British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook in Belgrade.

Kosovo's future is a purely Yugoslav matter, Milosevic lectured him. Alarmed by the assault, the US will press its European allies for punitive measures against Milosevic's regime at a meeting in London Monday of the six-nation Contact Group on the former Yugoslav federation, but opposition from Russia is expected to dilute any response.

Observers in Yugoslavia wonder whether anyone — Milosevic, Rugova or any foreign government — can control events in Kosovonow. The fledgling guerrilla army, recently estimated to number 200 fighters, is being fed by Serbian repression, financial contributors in the Albanian diaspora and tens of thousands of guns that have made their way to Kosovo from Communist-era stockpiles in Albania since the conflict there.

"We have all the preconditions for a civil war — long, bloody and with an outcome that will certainly be unfavorable for the Serbian authorities," Milos Vasic, a liberal, independent commentator, wrote last week in the Belgrade magazine *Vreme*.

While little is known of the guerrilla group and less about its losses in the past week, the police assault could further weaken the unpopular Rugova's nonviolent leadership and prompt more Albanians to take up arms, said Baron Haxhiu, editor of Kosovo's independent Albanian-language newspaper, *Koha Ditore*.

"Politics is dead in Kosovo. The only politics in Kosovo is the [Kosovo Liberation Army]," he said. "There is no way back after these events in Drenica." A bigger fear is that low-intensity combat will spread from Kosovo to neighboring Macedonia, which has a restive Albanian minority and a Kosovo Liberation Army presence.

If that happened, analysts warn, neighboring states such as Serbia and Albania, but also Greece, Bulgaria and even Turkey, might be drawn into a tit-for-tat struggle, again plunging the Balkans into a major war.

(Los Angeles Times)

Dry Bones

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GRAPEVINE

By GREER FAY CASHMAN

Begging your pardon...

ON this Yitzhak Navon and Moshe Nissim concur: A general amnesty as part of the nation's 50th anniversary celebrations isn't good sense. But Israel's fifth president and the former justice minister are at odds over whether granting pardons should continue to be among the rights accorded the president of the state.

Speaking on the subject to The Israel Association of Public Law, Navon shared some of the tribulations he had undergone when considering appeals for pardons, revealing that there had been instances in which his inclination toward leniency was suppressed by Nissim and the appeals committee.

The opposite had also occurred — as, for instance, in the 1985 prisoner exchange agreement with Ahmed Jibril. Navon opposed the deal but had no option other than to sign it.

Navon, who regards the presidency as a purely ceremonial post symbolizing national unity, suggested it might be a good idea to remove the president's authority to grant amnesties. Nissim disagreed, and noted that although the president must consult with the justice minister over reducing sentences or granting pardons, he does have the right to refuse an appeal without consulting with the minister.

At one point a member of the audience interrupted Navon, taking him to task over a letter of appeal that had received no answer.

"I no longer have the status for you to appeal to me," Navon told him kindly. "But talk to me afterwards, anyway."

PRIOR to attending a performance of *Honey*, the new play by internationally renowned playwright Yehoshua Sobol, Reuma Weizman hosted members of the Society for the Protection of Nature at Beit Hanassi in a panel discussion which stressed the importance of protecting nature and the environment for future generations.

However, Weizman later somewhat tarnished the "green" impression by turning up at the theater in a fur-trimmed coat.

AWARDED a plaque for her services to the Jerusalem Region of Americans and Canadians in Israel, outgoing chairperson Ruby Ray Karzen, the wife of Rabbi Jay Karzen, commented: "I'll put it with my *reberzin* plaques." When her successor Murray Saffran remarked, "You won this on your own, Ruby," Karzen retorted: "Believe me, I won the others too."

SEVERAL of the women in Israel's Indian community are getting out their best saris for next Thursday's festive dinner celebrating 50 years of Indian, Israeli independence. The event, hosted by the Israel India Cultural Association, will be held at the Tandoori Restaurant in Herzliya Pituah.

Proprietor Rina Pushkarna is going to great lengths to ensure that Jewish dietary laws are properly observed. The food is being prepared in her kosher outlet in Jerusalem, and the plates and flatware hired from a kosher catering agency.

Actually, Pushkarna doesn't need a special occasion to promote traditional Indian garb. She wears it all the time. Special guests at the dinner will include Shimon Peres, who reportedly will talk on a subject other than his vision of a new

Middle East, and Indian ambassador Ranjan Mathai.

SOME Israelis who seldom move in Indian circles had an inkling of how colorful and impressive an Indian gathering can be when they attended a reception at the Dan Accadia Hotel hosted by Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin Shahak and his wife Tali. The event honored visiting Indian Army Chief of Staff Gen. Parkash Malik, his wife and other top Indian military brass.

Most members of the IDF general staff were there with their wives, but the most elegant of them couldn't compete with the Indian women in their rich, eye-catching saris. A number of the Indian generals were decked out in their finest uniforms, replete with turbans. It was Malik's first trip abroad as chief of India's army.

CURIOS about Jewish laws and customs and eager to study them, Euripides Evriviades the ambassador of Cyprus, got more than he bargained for when he visited the store of bookseller Michael Pomerantz.

Evriviades, who arrived only minutes before afternoon prayer services, was fascinated as he watched "congregants" file into the store and begin to shake backwards and forwards. But what he, like many other members of the diplomatic community, was most eager to learn about was the significance of the knitted *kippa*.

The remark last week by former head of IDF Intelligence Shlomo Gazit regarding knitted *kippa*-wearers offended circles far beyond the National Religious Party and the Greater Israel Movement. And it had diplomats scurrying to their information sources so they could report back to their respective foreign affairs departments on what is so controversial about this particular head covering.

THE Gaon brothers are known to be devoted to each other — but it's rather amazing that in the same week Benny Gaon resigned as CEO of Koor his younger brother Yehoram should have of the *Tekuma* series on Israel Television.

Anyone who thought that the senior Gaon's latest move might free him to run on the Labor ticket against Jerusalem mayor Ehud Olmert in the upcoming municipal elections was mistaken. In a Wednesday meeting with Labor chairman Ehud Barak Gaon declined to enter the local political scene. There are some who have already tapped him as finance minister if Labor wins the next Knesset elections.

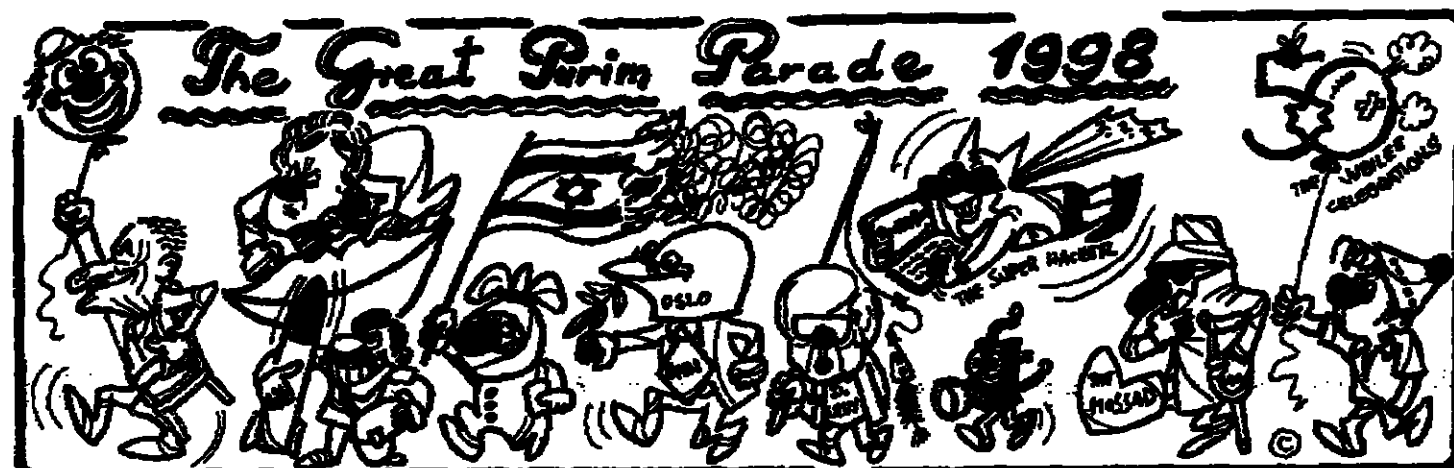
IRONIC in the 50th anniversary year of the state: that the great revisionist leader Abba Ahimeir, one of the first to organize active opposition to the Mandatory government, should be ignored by the current Likud-led government on the 100th anniversary celebration of his birth.

Not a single member of the cabinet showed up at Metsudat Zeev in Tel Aviv to hear historian Benzion Netanyahu, who is not only father of the premier but also a veteran Revisionist who knew and worked with Ahimeir.

Things might have been different had Ahimeir's sons — Ya'acov, a senior newsmen with the Israel Broadcasting Authority, and Yossi, a former Prime Minister's Office director and now a public relations executive — themselves been cabinet ministers. Then few would have dared offend them.

BRULIK

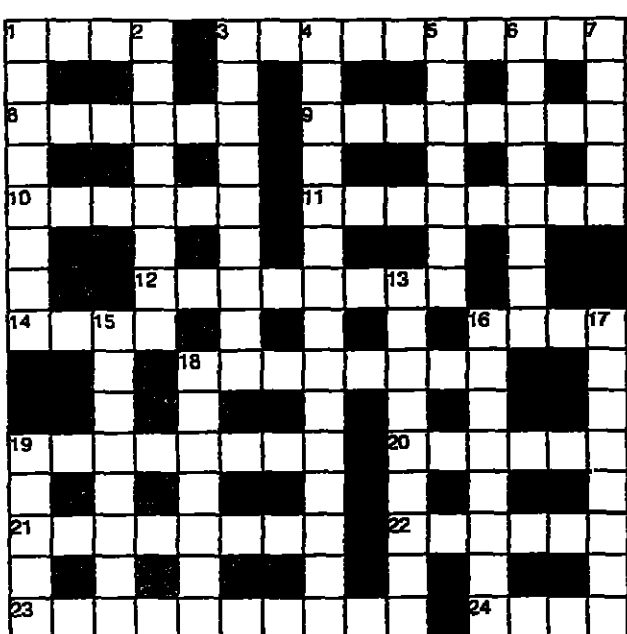
by DOSH



CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

- ACROSS
- Minor drawback (4)
 - Unhappy writer, manipulated by his editor perhaps (4,6)
 - The first children formed a network (6)
 - Cover up for a member of parliament who is late (8)
 - Listens to the last coffin bearer (6)
 - Recount details about the anaesthetic (8)
 - Perhaps I might be given a jewel (6)
 - Work done in a back street is the best (4)
 - Like to get first class return to the continent (4)
 - Second rate, undercooked fish caught fighting (8)
 - Something sweet made with rare recipe (8)

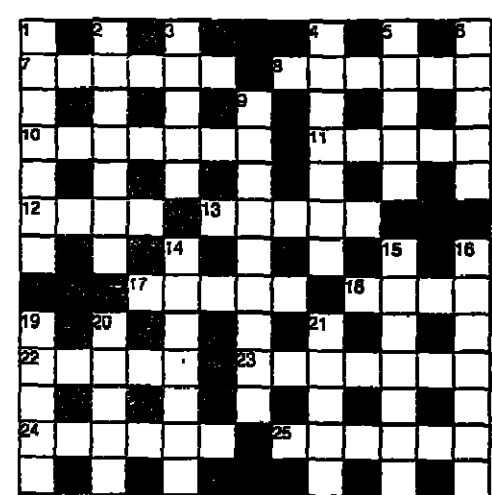
- One who produces a response which is always alright inside (6)
 - Just like a youngster to be rather stupid! (6)
 - Performing part of a play in middle age (6)
 - Recalled MP in a rush (10)
 - Found on stage? (4)
- DOWN
- Take care! The time is not right (5,3)
 - Girl's hair was causing great unhappiness (8)
 - He looks after the workers (9)



SOLUTIONS



Yesterday's Quick Solution
ACROSS: 1 Sauce, 4 Error, 10 Learner, 11 Nudge, 12 Deane, 13 Eternal, 15 Note, 17 Jem, 18 Rally, 22 Tune, 25 Slight, 27 Overt, 29 Addle, 30 Evident, 31 Edits, 32 Score.
DOWN: 2 Again, 3 Content, 5 Rise, 6 Ordinal, 7 Blade, 8 Greet, 9 Realm, 14 Term, 16 Gath, 19 Upset, 20 Amelia, 21 Easy, 23 Utter, 24 State, 26 Great, 28 Emerge.



QUICK CROSSWORD

- ACROSS
- Dealer in stocks & shares (6)
 - Goblins (6)
 - Fence in (7)
 - Additional (5)
 - eg Hilary (4)
 - Ponder (5)
 - Colour scheme (5)
 - Continent (4)
 - Flat (5)
 - High mountain (7)
 - Cower (6)
 - Muslim king (6)
- DOWN
- Complains (7)
 - Affect (7)
 - Acid fruit (5)
 - Endure (7)
 - Leaves out (5)
 - Normal (5)
 - Matured (9)
 - Study of rocks & strata (7)
 - Views (7)
 - Throwing (7)
 - Cut through (5)
 - Shun (5)
 - Light musical entertainment (5)

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Inside

'Havelange promised World Cup to Germany as well'

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Pistons shock Pacers

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Sports Editors
Joe Hoffman & Ori Lewis

Soccer leaders play Petah Tikva

By ORI LEWIS

National League soccer returns this weekend after a week's break with the tussle at the top the focal point of the action.

Leaders Hapoel Tel Aviv will face a difficult test of nerves against mid-table Maccabi Petah Tikva, a side which this season is in the lower half of the middle group, but has nevertheless been known to cause trouble to its opponents.

High-flying Hapoel, who have won most of their games by virtue of a single goal, can afford no charity to a side which has nothing to play for in this campaign.

Any slip-up by Hapoel will surely see Betar Jerusalem capitalize on the situation as they host Hapoel Petah Tikva at Teddy Stadium.

Betar will be trying to get over what they claim was some appalling refereeing decisions in last week's State Cup last-16 win over Hapoel Beit She'an, but with their current form there seems little reason to fear the Jerusalemies won't get the result they are after: a win.

This weekend's National League fixtures (all matches tomorrow at 15:00 unless stated):

Hapoel Kfar Sava vs. Ironi Rishon, Kfar Sava, today 15:00; Hapoel Haifa vs. Hapoel Beersheba, Kiryat Eliezer, Betar Jerusalem vs. Hapoel Petah Tikva, Teddy Stadium, 17:15; Maccabi Tel Aviv vs. Hapoel Ashkelon, National Stadium 16:00; Ironi Ashdod vs. Maccabi Herzliya, Ashdod 15:30; Maccabi Petah Tikva vs. Hapoel Tel Aviv, Petah Tikva; Hapoel Beit She'an vs. Hapoel Jerusalem, Beit She'an today 14:30; Bnei Yehuda vs. Maccabi Haifa, Hatikva Quarter.

National League	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Diff.	Pts
Hapoel Tel Aviv	21	14	5	2	22	8	14	47
Betar Jerusalem	21	12	8	1	32	24	8	44
Hapoel Haifa	21	10	8	3	28	21	7	38
Maccabi Haifa	21	11	4	6	24	26	8	37
Hapoel Petah Tikva	21	9	6	6	30	24	6	33
Hapoel Kfar Sava	21	6	8	7	27	27	0	29
Hapoel Jerusalem	21	7	8	6	24	25	-1	29
Ironi Ashdod	21	6	7	8	26	33	-7	24
Maccabi Herzliya	21	6	7	8	24	27	-3	25
Maccabi Tel Aviv	21	5	9	7	15	20	-5	24
Maccabi Tel Aviv	21	5	8	8	23	24	-1	23
Ironi Rishon LeZion	21	4	5	10	27	35	-8	23
Bnei Yehuda	21	4	7	10	17	24	-7	19
Hapoel Beit She'an	21	4	7	10	19	30	-11	19
Hapoel Ashkelon	21	4	6	11	17	29	-12	18
Hapoel Beersheba	21	3	7	11	24	42	-18	16

Maccabi says arrivederci to Europe

By BRIAN FREEMAN

Maccabi Tel Aviv fell just short of its quest to return to the EuroLeague Final 8 for the first time in six seasons, losing 68-65 at Teamsystem Bologna in the third and decisive game of the Final 16 last night.

David Rivers and Dominique Wilkins showed their big-game experience in leading Teamsystem from a 10-point second-half deficit to victory before a packed and wild home crowd.

Rivers, who led Olympiakos to the European championship last season, started the Teamsystem comeback with 13 minutes remaining in the second half by drilling his third three-pointer of the contest and sealed the game with two free-throws only seven seconds from the end.

Rivers entered the Final 16 series shooting only 28 percent (14-50) from three-point

range this season, but burned the nets for 50% (8-16) in the three games against Maccabi, including 3-6 last night.

Wilkins, who led Panathinaikos to the European championship in his last European season in 1996, had been a disappointment in the series, shooting only 34% from the field in the first two games and averaging only 13.5 points. He was also very ineffective in the first half last night, scoring only four points in the game's first 24 minutes.

But then, he showed why he is a big-money player, leading Teamsystem's charge to the Final 8 with 14 second-half points, including eight in Bologna's decisive 14-0 run midway through the second half which erased Maccabi's 10-point lead.

In contrast to Teamsystem's clutch performances, Maccabi continued its mediocre tradition this decade of playing well enough to challenge the continent's giants but failing to

crack the European elite.

For the third time since the mini-series started in 1992, Maccabi reached the third and decisive game (1992, 1997 and this season) only to lose on the opponent's court.

Although Maccabi fought hard all the way, careless mistakes down the stretch showed why this season's Maccabi was also not meant to advance further.

After cutting the deficit to 64-63, Maccabi had the ball and a chance to take the lead.

But after Teamsystem defenders knocked the ball out of bounds, Maccabi players apparently were unaware after inbound the ball with under two minutes in the game that the 30-second clock was close to zero and turned the ball over by failing to get a shot off in time.

Even when Tel Aviv was given a second chance to tie the game when down by three points and in possession of the ball with

under 30 seconds left, Maccabi failed to take the opportunity.

Oded Katash decided to drive the lane for a layup to cut the advantage to 66-65 with less than 10 seconds left instead of setting up a three-point attempt to tie it.

When Rivers made both free throws after being fouled upon receiving the inbound pass, Radovic was forced to rush a three-point attempt, which missed and ended Maccabi's European season.

Earlier in the contest, it seemed that Maccabi was on its way to its first victory over in Bologna.

After falling behind 36-27 with only 1:45 remaining in the first half, Tel Aviv went on a 25-6 run over the next 14 minutes which made Purim-celebrating Maccabi fans delirious enough not to tell the difference between Oded Katash and Mickey Berkowitz.

But that stretch ended as abruptly as it had

started, as Teamsystem followed with its 14-0 run from which Maccabi was not quite able to recover.

For Maccabi, Katash had 22 points, Doron Sheffer and Rashard Griffin 14, Randy White 11 and Nadav Henefeld 4.

For Teamsystem, Rivers had 19 points, Wilkins 18, Gregor Fucks 13, Roberto Chiaccio 8, Carlton Myers 7 and Paolo Moretti 3.

Teamsystem now faces Kinder Bologna in the quarterfinals.

In the other two Final 16 contests which went to a third game, Alba Berlin blew Zvezda Sherf-led PAOK Salonika 104-71 will face AEK Athens in the quarter and CSKA Moscow defeated Barcelona 76 and will face Partizan Belgrade, swept defending champions Olympique their series. The other quarterfinal pits Benetton Treviso against Efes

North Carolina scuppers Navy 88-52



Xavier Musketeers Torraye Braggs (left) fights for possession of the ball with Washington Huskies Thalo Green during first-half action of their NCAA first round game yesterday.

This weekend's NCAA tournament action

all times EST

EAST REGIONAL
First Round (yesterday)
North Carolina 88, Navy 52
North Carolina Charlotte (19-10) vs. Illinois-Chicago (22-8)
Chicago (22-8)
Princeton (26-1) vs. UNLV (20-12), 7:40 p.m.
Michigan State (20-7) vs. Eastern Michigan (20-9), 30 minutes after previous game
Washington 69, Washington 69
South Carolina (23-7) vs. Richmond (22-7)
Indiana (19-11) vs. Oklahoma (22-10), 7:40 p.m.
Connecticut (22-4) vs. Fairfield Dickinson (23-6), 30 minutes after previous game
Second Round (tomorrow)
North Carolina vs. N.C. Charlotte-Illinois-Chicago winner, 12:10 p.m.

Michigan State-Eastern Michigan winner vs. Princeton vs. UNLV winner, 30 minutes after previous game
South Carolina-Richmond winner vs. Xavier-Indiana-Oklahoma winner, 30 minutes after previous game
Washington winner, 4:38 p.m.
Connecticut-Fairleigh Dickinson winner vs. Indiana-Oklahoma winner, 30 minutes after previous game
SOUTH REGIONAL
First Round (yesterday)
Syracuse (24-5) vs. Iowa (27-5), 12:25 p.m.
New Mexico (23-7) vs. Butler (22-10), 30 minutes after previous game
Florida (22-8) vs. Murray State (28-9), 7:50 p.m.
Kansas (24-3) vs. Prairie View (13-16), 30 minutes after previous game
Purdue (25-7) vs. Delaware (20-9), 7:55 p.m.
St. John's (22-9) vs. Detroit (24-5), 30 minutes after previous game
Midwest Regional (yesterday)
Missouri (22-4) vs. Valparaiso (21-4), 12:30 p.m.
Texas Christian (27-5) vs. Florida State (17-15), 30 minutes after previous game
Florida (22-8) vs. Murray State (28-9), 7:50 p.m.
Kansas (24-3) vs. Prairie View (13-16), 30 minutes after previous game
Purdue (25-7) vs. Delaware (20-9), 7:55 p.m.
St. John's (22-9) vs. Detroit (24-5), 30 minutes after previous game

WEST REGIONAL
First Round (yesterday)
Maryland (19-16) vs. Utah State (25-7)
Illinois (22-8) vs. South Alabama (21-6)
Tennessee (20-6) vs. Illinois State (24-6)
Arizona (27-4) vs. Nichols State (18-9)
West Virginia 82, Temple 52
Cincinnati (26-5) vs. Northern Arizona (21-7)
Utah (25-3) vs. San Francisco (18-10)
Arkansas (22-8) vs. Nebraska (20-11)
Second Round (tomorrow)
Maryland-Utah State winner vs. Illinois-South Alabama winner, 4:38 p.m.
Arizona-Nichols State winner vs. Tennessee-Illinois State winner, 30 minutes after previous game
Cincinnati-Northern Arizona winner vs. West Virginia, 2:20 p.m.
Utah-San Francisco winner vs. Arkansas-Nebraska winner, 30 minutes after previous game

EU: French ticket offer unsatisfactory

STRASBOURG, France (Reuters) — European Competition Commissioner Karel Van Miert said yesterday the French World Cup organizers had not yet made a satisfactory offer to distribute more tickets to supporters outside France.

Van Miert said the organizers had offered to put only 50,000 of 160,000 remaining

tickets in the hands of national football federations, and sell the other 110,000 to all comers. There will be 2.5 million tickets in all.

"We are not yet, at present, satisfied by what we have been offered by the organizers," he told the European Parliament.

He told Belgian radio the Commission was asking for all 160,000 unsold tickets to be made available to fans outside France to make up for a disproportionate allocation to French fans.

"The bottleneck in this case is that we believe these 160,000 tickets should serve as compensation," he said.

In Paris, a CFC spokesman said he had no immediate comment on Van Miert's remarks.

Van Miert said that the figures still had to be checked and there was a possibility of pursuing unspecified proceedings against the World Cup organizing committee if there was no satisfactory offer. The Commission has already sent a warning letter.

"We'll try to correct where it is possible, and for the rest see whether it's still necessary to impose a fine," Van Miert told French fans.

The European Commission says that under EU law, the way tickets for this summer's matches have been distributed discriminates against people outside France. But last week it admitted it was powerless to retrieve tickets that had already been sold.

Manchester United, Arsenal ready to renew rivalry

By MIKE COLLETT

LONDON (Reuters) — Manchester United's 104-year-old rivalry with Arsenal has developed into one of the most passionate in English soccer.

While Tottenham, Chelsea and West Ham have, over the years, experienced success in cup competitions, Arsenal are the only London side regularly to match the might of the northern clubs in the league.

At the start of this season Liverpool had won the title a record 18 times, United 11 and Arsenal 10.

And while the odds still favor United adding this season's title to that total, Arsenal's tenacious chase of the champions will add an extra ingredient to tomorrow's premier league clash at Old Trafford.

The two clubs, currently first and second in the league, have fought out — once literally — many thrilling battles down the years with United chalking up some impressive big

wins at Old Trafford in the 1950s of 6-1 (1951-52) and 6-2 (1956-57).

The most famous match the clubs have ever played took place in that decade when United won 5-4 at Highbury on February 1, 1958 — the last match the ill-fated Busby Babes played in England before eight of them lost their lives in the Munich air disaster five days later.

Then, as now, United were chasing a hat-trick of title wins after being crowned champions in 1956 and 1957 and by half-time United had raced into a 3-0 lead with goals from Duncan Edwards, Tommy Taylor and Bobby Charlton.

In the second half Arsenal suddenly found their rhythm and remarkably scored three times in three minutes through David Herd, who later joined United, and two from Jimmy Bloomfield.

United struck back with Dennis Viollet and Taylor scoring his second of the afternoon to make it 5-3 — but still Arsenal were not finished and Derek Tapscott set up a thrilling finale by bringing the score back to 5-4. That is how it finished — in more ways than one.

Five of the United team that day died at Munich the following week — Edwards, Roger Byrne, Taylor, Mark Jones and Eddie Colman. United's title dream died too and their makeshift side eventually finished ninth in the table.

The clubs also took part in one of the weirdest FA Cup finals ever played, in 1979.

Many history books now refer to the game as a thriller. It wasn't. It was one of the most boring ever played apart from the last five dramatic minutes and is more rightly referred to as "The Five Minute Final." Arsenal had taken a 2-0 first-half lead through Brian Talbot and Frank Stapleton and then killed off the game in the second half.

But with just five minutes to go millions of watching TV viewers were stunned from their slumbers when Gordon McQueen scored to

make it 2-1.

In the 88th minute United were level at 2-2 when Sammy McIlroy equalized, sending their previously dejected fans deliriously happy. Viewers at home sat bolt upright in astonishment at the unexpected turn of events — and got ready to open up another can for extra time.

But Arsenal, now seemingly tottering on the verge of collapse showed reserves of mental strength and physical recovery beyond the scope of most other sides.

With only seconds remaining, Alan Sunderland scored Arsenal's winner after the most exquisite creativity from Liam Brady and Graham Rix to wrap up not the most thrilling Cup Final in history, but certainly the most thrilling five minutes.

Years later McIlroy, now the manager of Macclesfield summed up his feelings after that astonishing finale. "It was like picking eight draws on the Pools — and then discovering you had never posted the coupon," he said.

Fansions ran high when the two clubs met at Old Trafford in October 1990 when a goal from Anders Larsson gave Arsenal a 1-0 victory — a match still remembered because of a 21-man brawl on the pitch between the players.

Only Arsenal goalkeeper David Seaman did not get involved in the fighting which led to both clubs being fined £50,000 and being deducted points — Arsenal losing two and United one.

The punishment did not stop Arsenal winning the title that season, but at least United had their chance of revenge a few weeks later when they won 6-2 at Highbury in a League Cup match — Arsenal's heaviest home defeat for 69 years.

This season's encounter at Highbury perhaps was not a classic, but was certainly an excellent game which Arsenal won 3-2. In one way or another, tomorrow's eagerly-awaited clash has much to live up to.

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